



Left Dissent: The Australian Commercial News Media's Characterisation of 21st Century Protests Critical of Capitalism

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Abstract

21st Century protests critical of capitalism feature prominently in Australian commercial news media. Because the individuals in these protests criticise the social and economic system commercial news media operates within, this raises questions about how these protests and protesters are characterised in news coverage. To explore the issue, this thesis analysed the newspaper reportage of the Occupy Melbourne City Square protest (October 2011) and the Brisbane G20 protests (November 2014) in Australia over two week reporting periods. A framing analysis was conducted to identify the dominant frames by which the protests and those involved were characterised, with a focus on the framing devices of language choice and source selection.

Based on these approaches, several findings were made. Both protests were predominantly framed in terms of conflict. This included both verbal hostility and violent conflict between protesters and government, or between protesters and police. The newspapers' focus on physical conflict or the potential for physical conflict served to support a framing of the protests as dangerous, particularly for innocent bystanders. An economic consequences frame was also identified. This was exemplified in the foregrounding of the protest's negative impacts on local businesses. Correspondingly, the perspectives of representatives of the business fraternity and business operators predominated within the news coverage. Overall, this was consistent with the use of sources throughout the newspaper reportage, where elite voices from the government and police establishment predominated and served to support the characterisation of the protests and protesters in typically negative ways.

However, the study also found that protesters, as news sources, were able to articulate counter-frames and, at times, define their own characterisations within the news texts, albeit to a far lesser extent than the elite sources. As a result, the newspaper coverage was characterised by only minimal engagement with the causes of the radical protest groups, which seemed to negate the purpose of the protests (to raise awareness of the groups'

objectives). News frames were instead constructed in accordance with the agendas of primary definers, such as the police and government.

This is significant because it highlights the potential limitations of Australian commercial news media within a liberal capitalist democracy.

Introduction

“The press is a mighty engine.” – Pott (Dickens 1836/1987: 162)

The early 21st Century has seen significant media coverage of globalised movements critical of the capitalist system. Two of the most widely covered by news media during this period are Occupy and the various G20 protests. The Australian manifestations of these two movements have generated substantial commercial news media coverage – most evident in the reporting of the 2011 Melbourne City Square and 2014 Brisbane G20 protests. This thesis aims to contribute an analysis of Australian newspaper coverage of these two protest events. The purpose of this is to highlight Australian commercial news media’s characterisation of 21st Century protests critical of capitalism.

Although protests raise a wide spectrum of issues, the coverage of those critical of capitalism have been chosen for analysis because they directly challenge the system commercial news media operates within. In doing so, two central questions will be advanced: “how does Australian commercial news media characterise 21st Century protests critical of capitalism”, and “to what extent can protesters critical of capitalism insert their social, economic and political definitions into the news coverage?” These questions will be investigated by employing a framing analysis of relevant Australian news texts. The focus will be on the framing devices of language and source selection which define the coverage. The word choices of the major newspapers based in the cities where the protests were held, as well as those of a national newspaper, will be examined to get an understanding of how the two case study protests were characterised. Analysing language use within the news texts is important because it can reveal the dominant news frames used to portray the protests. In highlighting

the primary frames of the coverage, the types of voices that are privileged in each of the news texts will also be assessed. The purpose of this is to reveal which sources are selected as primary definers and how their quotes serve to inform the framing of the protests. This can show how much voice or lack of voice the protesters have over the messages conveyed in the news coverage.

Before an explanation of the approach is given, it is essential to provide some context for the case studies in order to assist the reader to understand the history and motives behind the specific protests. Occupy Melbourne is an offshoot of the global Occupy movement, which originated in New York City on 17 September 2011 (Van Gelder 2011). As Nail notes, “the origins of the Occupy movement and its defining strategies are profoundly global” (2013: 21). This is evident, notes Nail (2013), as the movement took inspiration from the Zapatistas, a group who organised the world’s first and largest global anti-neoliberal gatherings: the Intercontinental Encuentros of 1994 and 1996. Later in the decade, People’s Global Action took a role in organising protests at almost every significant alter-globalization summit from the Seattle WTO protests (1999) to the 2001 Genoa G8 protests (Nail 2013). The PGA’s decentralised and autonomous style of organisation was derived from the Zapatistas and is said to have influenced the way most subsequent summit protests against neoliberalism have been organised (such as the Occupy movement) (Nail 2013). As well as the Zapatistas and the PGA, the Occupy movement was also inspired by the Arab Spring, similar uprisings in Europe and, according to Hobsbawm, by Barack Obama’s presidential campaign (Van Gelder 2011; Whitehead 2011).

The Occupy movement was initially commonly referred to as ‘Occupy Wall Street’ because the movement’s first official gathering was in New York’s financial district (Van Gelder 2011). Although originally intending to occupy the headquarters of JP Morgan Chase, the wealthiest bank in the world, the protesters were forced to relocate to Zuccotti Park in lower Manhattan (Gitlin 2012). This is because police sealed off the entire square with a steel fence to prevent the protesters from reaching their objective (Gitlin 2012). Occupy protests tend to involve the setting up of protest camps in particular locations, comprising participants who are normally from diverse backgrounds (Van Gelder 2011). The importance of ‘space’ to protest camps is indicated by both their focus on “imagined space” created around issues or ideas and physical space, which is manifested in occupations and direct action (Feigenbaum et al 2013). Feigenbaum et al (2013) note that protest camps are spaces where an array of demands for social change are articulated and debated amongst members, usually in confrontation with the state. In the case of Occupy Wall Street, the protest camp was governed by general assemblies, with decisions reached through consensus (Van Gelder 2011). It was an egalitarian community as there were no paid staff or hierarchies, everyone got fed, and dispute resolution was facilitated (Van Gelder 2011). The purpose of Occupy protest camps is to peacefully raise awareness of the fact that corporations and the wealthiest one percent of the population benefit disproportionately from a deeply unjust system (Van Gelder 2011; Wood 2015). Those involved also seek to highlight their belief that working and middle class people are disadvantaged by this system and that there is a lack of funding for crucial services such as healthcare and education (Van Gelder 2011). Within a matter of weeks, following the Zuccotti Park occupation, protests influenced by Occupy Wall Street spread, nationally and globally to over 1,500 cities (Van Gelder 2011).

As an Australian manifestation of this movement, Occupy Melbourne is concerned with:

The wide, unfair disparity between the rich and the poor, social discrimination, bribery and fraud in the financial sectors, insatiability of corporations for power and wealth, and the sway that corporations and lobbyists hold over the government. (Occupy Melbourne 2013)

The group's first protest saw them set up a camp in Melbourne City Square on 15 October 2011. It was carried out in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street protest (Butler 2011). For six days, the Occupy Melbourne protesters refused to yield to the city council's request that they disperse. They were only moved on after being forcibly evicted by Victoria police, who were mainly directed by Lord Mayor Robert Doyle, on 21 October 2011 (Levy and Preiss 2011). On 2 November 2011, the protesters' responded by occupying the Melbourne Treasury Gardens (Veness and Ritchie 2011; White et al. 2011). Their purpose was to make the area "home to the movement" (news.com.au 2011). Furthermore, they now demanded changes to health care, refugee, transport and aged care policies (news.com.au 2011). After two weeks, protesters were ordered to remove their belongings, such as tents, by Melbourne City Council (Murnane et al. 2011). This led to uncooperative protesters being dragged away from the Treasury Gardens by police officers (Murnane et al. 2011). Eventually, the protesters abandoned their protest as they were tired of being 'constantly harassed' by police (Murnane et al. 2011; MX 2011). Occupy Melbourne responded to their treatment while at the Treasury Gardens by launching a lawsuit against the City Council, which they ultimately lost (Gillett 2014; Lucas 2013).

Like the Occupy movement, G20 protests are primarily concerned with economic issues, tending to attract protesters who are critical of greed and inequity in the financial sector, as well as undemocratic and unaccountable decision making by those in power (Malleon and

Wachsmuth 2011; Press 2014). The first G20 summit, held in 2008, saw the heads of government of the 20 largest national economies convene in Washington, DC (Malleson and Wachsmuth 2011). One of the issues addressed by this summit was the global financial crisis caused by “the collapse of the mortgage market and the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers” (The Economist 2008; Malleson and Wachsmuth 2011). According to Malleson and Wachsmuth (2011), the purpose of the Washington G20 meeting was to advance an international cause of bank bailouts and austerity measures while consequently reducing social welfare spending. This neoliberal cause provoked various protests in different countries (Malleson and Wachsmuth 2011). Subsequent G20 protests, such as those held in response to the 2009 London, 2010 Toronto and 2011 Cannes summits, have received significant news media attention because of violent confrontations between protesters and police (The Telegraph 2012). This suggests that G20 summit protests typically involve violence.

Like the G20 summits mentioned above, the Brisbane G20 summit attracted a large number of protesters. Held on 15-16 November 2014, the purpose of the summit was to foster discussion between countries with the 20 best performing economies in the world about the pressing economic issues of the day (ABC 2014; Australian Associated Press 2011). The participating countries included Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States (ABC 2014). Protesters sought to stage spectacles that would raise awareness of issues they felt were being ignored by the world leaders and high powered business representatives involved in summit talks. Although it is problematic to generalise due to the diversity of the groups and individuals involved, the various causes highlighted by the protests were mostly informed by criticisms of capitalism. Accordingly, the protesters were generally there to highlight a belief that the G20 only served the world’s

powerful ‘one percent’. In doing so, they asserted that those involved in the summit could be doing more to reduce world poverty, and called attention to the effect that perpetual economic growth has on the environment and the negative impacts of capitalism on Australia’s Aboriginal people (Atfield and Stephens 2014; Madigan 2014; Olding 2014; Silva 2014).

While the Melbourne City Square protest was unanticipated, authorities were prepared for the Brisbane G20 protests (Australian Associated Press 2012). This is evidenced by Assistant Commissioner Katarina Carroll’s adumbration that Queensland Police intended to engage with the protest groups to inform them of what was expected of them (The Queensland Times 2013). Consequently, there was sufficient time for security measures and increased police powers to be implemented, with the intent of preventing violent or disorderly protests such as those that befell the 2010 G20 event in Toronto, Canada (Harris Rimmer 2014; The Queensland Times 2013). Due to the presence of many elites, the safety of the high profile G20 summit was paramount. The authorities aimed to ensure this by passing rigid laws for the prevention of disorder. The *G20 Safety and Security Act* gave police the power to ban “troublesome” protesters from Brisbane’s “declared zone” (Atfield 2014; Robertson 2014). This declared zone “stretch[ed] from South Bank, to Kelvin Grove, Bowen Hills, Fortitude Valley and Woolloongabba” (Doorley 2014). As well as this, they also forbade protesters from wearing masks and carrying megaphones or banners larger than 1 metre x 2 metres. If protesters were found in possession of any of these items, the police had the power to put a stop to their protests (Robertson 2014).

The characterisation of the protests analysed in this thesis as ‘critical of capitalism’ also requires an explanation. In this thesis, references to protest groups ‘critical of capitalism’ are to those who attempt to raise awareness of the negative aspects of the system, such as economic inequality, lack of corporate accountability and environmental degradation. However these groups are generally not opposed to the system in the socialist sense of being ‘anti-capitalist’. Instead, a majority of the protest groups analysed in this thesis simply critique the capitalist system, while advocating reformist methods to improve it. One such group is Occupy Melbourne. As shown above, Occupy Melbourne self-identifies as a movement which seeks to make capitalism more humane (Occupy Melbourne 2013). Accordingly, they advocate reforming the capitalist system, not overthrowing it (Occupy Melbourne 2013).

Conversely, some of the protest groups at the Brisbane G20 are more problematic to label as ‘critical of capitalism’ because of their lack of concern with critiquing the capitalist system (Atfield and Stephens 2014). Because of this, the case study of the Brisbane G20 will be limited to identifying news media’s characterisations of specific groups which are informed by criticisms of capitalism. These groups include BrisCAN-G20, Anonymous, Dirty Work, Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance, the Climate Guardians and the Queensland Greens political party. These groups were chosen for analysis as they received the most attention from the newspapers.

BrisCAN-G20 is defined as a protest group critical of capitalism on the basis that the main issues they highlight, and which were discussed at their protests, are: “The Economy: Growth vs Sustainability, Environment, Climate & Earth Rights, Dispossession, Decolonisation,

Politics, Democracies, Social Justice: Human, Labour, Gender Rights and De-militarisation & Peace” (BrisCAN-G20 2014). Infact, BrisCANG20’s website goes beyond mere criticism of the capitalist system by drawing a connection between “anti-summit protests and “capitalism’s abolition and subsequent transformation of society” (BrisCAN-G20 2014).

Anonymous is most well-known for its hacking of the websites of governments, corporations and religious organisations in order to make the functioning of these institutions more transparent to the public (AnoNews 2013). However, as well as posting images that highlight criticisms of capitalism such as “hunger kills more people than the Zika virus or Ebola – but, it’s not considered a significant problem because rich people can’t catch it”, Anonymous Brisbane’s Facebook page reveals sympathies with anti-capitalist groups (Anonymous’ Brisbane 2016). For example, they share links to articles created by radical groups such as Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation Sydney (ASF Sydney), a group that seeks an anarchist alternative to both Marxist-Leninist communism and capitalism (Anonymous Brisbane 2016). This suggests that Anonymous Brisbane share an anarchist ideology similar to ASF Sydney and are not merely critical of capitalism, but are at least sympathetic to those who call for capitalism’s overthrow.

By comparison, Dirty Work employs more moderate rhetoric critical of capitalism. Their website revealed that their whole enterprise at the summit was to spotlight slogans critical of the G20 onto the side of buildings. These included slogans such as “Dirty \$\$\$ = Dirty or G20: corporate plunder” (Guerilla Semiotics with Dirty Work 2014).

Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance are the most tenuous of the seven groups to define as critical of capitalism because the group's primary concerns are with "decolonization and the philosophy of Aboriginal nationalism" (Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance – WAR 2016), and not necessarily with issues surrounding capitalism. However, Blaum (1989) has emphasised the interrelatedness of colonialism and capitalism, arguing that colonialism accelerated the rise of capitalism. With the European colonisation of Australia, for example, came the imposition of capitalism on the hunter-gatherer society Australian Aboriginals thrived within (Grant et al 2005). This suggests that WAR's support for decolonisation may be related to an anti-capitalist outlook.

The Climate Guardians and the Queensland Greens were primarily motivated to protest by environmental concerns. Although not strictly a protest group, the Queensland Greens' characterisation by the newspapers will be included in the analysis and discussion. This is because of the party's role as a representative of the environmental movement at the protests (Atfield and Stephens 2014). Environmental movements are not homogenous, however they generally share a critical view of capitalist industrialism and the exploitation of natural resources (Rootes 2007). This is true of the Climate Guardians and the Queensland Greens, as environmental degradation caused by economic expansion is at the centre of their politics (ClimActs 2014; Hutton 2016).

Though it is not apparent what issues concerned the few individual protesters whose characterisations will be analysed, the fact that G20 protests are frequently framed in terms of capitalist economics means that they can be considered as primarily concerned with

critiquing capitalism (Herde 2014). Although, as evidenced above, those who seek the overthrow of the capitalist system were also present at the summit protests.

The case studies central in this thesis involve analysing the way in which specific Australian newspapers represent 21st Century protest groups critical of capitalism. Newspapers have been chosen as the medium of analysis because they allow information to be effectively gleaned, through identifying language choices and source selection in the coverage while also taking account of the context of reportage. This will enable findings on the way the protests were characterised. Print media is also important because it quite often provides cues for other news outlets about what is newsworthy (Christopher 2015; Greenslade 2011). The depictions they offer are worthy of analysis because commercial newspapers are still an important herald of information in the 21st Century. The ongoing importance of newspapers is indicated by Duffy and Rowden (2005), who claim, “Newspapers still have a huge reach and their influence leaks into other sections of the media”. This is demonstrated by information garnered by Enhanced Media Metrics Australia (EMMA) (The Newspaper Works 2014); their audience measurement system shows that Australian newspapers are still widely read in the 21st century, therefore they are potentially influential.

The ongoing influence of newspapers in Australian media is important to the central case studies in this thesis and the framing analyses of the Melbourne and Brisbane protests. Although there is no agreed-upon definition of ‘framing analysis’, it can be loosely defined as an examination of the ways in which news is packaged for interpretation (Franzosi and Vicari 2012; Goffman 1975). One of the strengths of a framing analysis is that it can be used to investigate the content of news texts whilst taking into account contextual variables, such as

news media practices (Maher 2003; Pan and Kosicki 1993). Drawing upon this method will allow an interrogation of the characterisations on display in the analysed news texts. Framing analysis typically considers a number of framing devices, of which language and sources are two of the most prominent (Li et al. 2007). It is important to study the language used in news stories because of its power to convey a particular message, either implicitly or explicitly. In relation to characterisations of protesters, this is accorded particular importance. As Cottle explains: “Whether groups are legitimated or symbolically positioned as ‘other’, labelled deviant or literally rendered speechless can...have far reaching consequences” (2003: 5).

The advantage of a framing analysis is that it can identify patterns in the coverage, which allow an understanding of how the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests were characterised in the selected newspapers. In order to achieve an effective framing analysis, an attempt must be made to show not just what is included but also what is excluded from the coverage. This is because it is important to call attention to the absence of particular details or contexts. In doing so, the silences of the coverage will be discussed, which will assist in breaking down the kinds of ‘common sense’ understandings presented by the news texts. As part of the news framing analysis, this thesis will have a focus on what Hall et al. termed ‘primary definers’ (1978/2013), in other words, on what types of sources (whether elite or non-elite) were able to insert their perspectives into the coverage and inform the framing. For the purposes of the central case studies, elite sources are defined as those from institutional backgrounds and non-elites as those not representing institutions. The following chapters contain discussions of the analyses and brief summaries of the findings.

This thesis is structured in five parts: following this introduction, the first chapter is the literature review; the second covers the approach and methods; the third chapter is concerned with the analysis and discussion; the final chapter presents the study's conclusions. The purpose of the literature review is to establish the previous scholarship on the representation of protesters in commercial news media. Although not solely concerned with 21st Century protests critical of capitalism, the scholarship will establish how protests in general have typically been represented in commercial news media. In line with the thesis's focus on source selection, the theory of primary and secondary definers will be emphasised to demonstrate the relationship between news sources and news framing. The literature review will also contribute to an understanding of the context of news media within a liberal capitalist system. There will be a focus on news values that guide news production within a liberal capitalist system. The chapter will also provide a brief history of the public sphere and, as a result, it will highlight the belief that modern capitalism has diminished the democratic ideal of the public sphere. An analysis of the relationship between the press and capitalism will see a focus on theories such as cultural hegemony, ideological state apparatuses, the political economy of media and media ownership. From this will come an understanding of how capitalism may affect news media representations.

The next section is the approach and methods chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the data collection process, elaborating on which news texts were analysed. This chapter will also show that the findings on the protester's characterisations come out of a focus on news framing, specifically from analyses of language and source selection of the newspapers. As well as this, the chapter will present a discussion on the literature on framing. In doing so, the strengths and weaknesses of this research method will be identified. Ultimately, the aim of this process is to demonstrate how a framing analysis is crucial for

determining which frames characterised the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests. This chapter will therefore offer a justification for the approach and methods of the thesis.

The findings of the case studies will be elaborated on in the analysis and discussion chapter. In this section, the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests will be analysed. As part of this, the predominant frames constructed in the news stories will be investigated to identify how the protest events and participants were characterised. The analysis will draw out the main sources given a voice in the news texts and determine how primary definers have had an impact on the dominant frames of the reportage. This will also indicate if protesters are able to assert themselves and, consequently, to insert their causes and counter-definitions into the news coverage. This will contribute to a discussion of the ‘common sense’ understandings being presented by the news texts.

There were several salient aspects in the findings of the case studies; the predominant frame was conflict, which saw a focus on both non-violent, verbal hostility and violence between protesters and authorities. The emphasis on conflict ultimately contributed to a foregrounding of the dangerousness of the events. An economic consequences frame was also dominant and saw the protests impugned by both local business owners and elites for having adverse effects on their livelihoods. The City Square protests were also attributed with responsibility for deterring patrons from using Melbourne businesses. The Brisbane G20 protest coverage had a predominant focus on the security of the event. This saw an emphasis, before the summit, on protester’s opposition to security measures implemented by the authorities and, during the summit, the tactical success of police in maintaining order. These frames resulted in the coverage giving minimal attention to the causes of the more radical protest groups.

The conclusion of the thesis will serve several purposes. Firstly, it will show what the case study findings have contributed to the literature. Consequently, the chapter will point out the differences and similarities between the findings in this thesis and past work on news framing of protests and primary definers in reportage. The chapter will also include a consideration of the limitations of the thesis case studies and propose subsequent research that might be conducted to build upon the findings. The conclusion will offer a brief summary of the findings and, in doing so, will show how the research questions have been answered.

The significance of this thesis lies in its potential to highlight the relationship between 21st Century protests critical of capitalism and Australian newspapers operating within this economic and political system. In doing so, and by revealing the predominant frames used to characterise the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests, the thesis contributes to the argument over whether or not capitalist values have an impact on news reportage. As a result, it may go some way to showing how Australian commercial news media depicts 21st Century capitalist issues.

Capitalism's impact on news media coverage, characterisation of protests with various causes, and dominance of primary definers have been broadly studied in the past. In order to further understanding of the issue of commercial news media's depiction of protests critical of capitalism within a liberal capitalist system, it is necessary to review the literature on these matters.

Literature Review

“The first freedom of the press is not to be a business.” – Karl Marx (Hardt 2000: 92)

This chapter establishes the relevant literature for the purposes of the thesis. It looks at past literature on protest characterisation in commercial news media by highlighting studies that directly focus on the representation of protesters in commercial news media. Not all of these works are concerned with protests critical of capitalism as the literature review explores news media’s approach to representing protest more generally. This is to further understanding of commercial news media’s relationship with protests. Ultimately this shows that protests are depicted negatively by news media and their causes are rarely the focus of coverage.

However this chapter also shows there are some authors who argue that protesters are able to insert their causes into news reportage. This review also focuses on the concepts of primary and second definers. This is important for the central case studies in this thesis, as Hall et al. (1978/2013), the originators of these theories, use them to define the relationship between sources and commercial news media and how particular voices (especially those of elites) are better able to have an impact on news agendas and frames. Leading on from this, the review engages with literature on the police establishment’s ability or inability to affect news coverage focusing on law and order.

Literature focusing on commercial news media’s role within a liberal capitalist system is also discussed. This entails highlighting the news values that guide the selection of stories in the production process and showing the underlying concerns of news media within a liberal capitalist system. Further, this chapter provides a brief history of the public sphere in order to demonstrate the ideals of news media as a democratic sphere and the impediments to this

system which came to the fore once it was subsumed within the capitalist system in the 19th Century. This entails a focus on Marx's concept of the base and superstructure which further reveals the influence of the capitalist base on the superstructure of the commercial news media superstructure. The relevant literature on Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony is foregrounded because of its importance to exploring the ways news media presents 'common sense' attitudes about capitalism, as well as how counter-views are embedded within coverage. Building upon this is Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses, which theorises that media presents a dominant ideology to attempt to ensure societal acceptance of the capitalist system.

This chapter also summarises literature which focuses on the political economy approach to analysing news media. For example, in the work of Herman and Chomsky (1988) the capitalist economy is considered to be a dominant factor in perpetuating the propaganda model of commercial news. This literature review also looks at how media ownership under capitalism can affect commercial news media discourse. This is particularly significant when analysing Australian newspapers, as the country's commercial media ownership is one of the most concentrated in the Western world (Harding-Smith 2011).

Though this review covers a wide range of theories concerning the influence of dominant ideologies, media ownership and representation of protests, its primary purpose is to highlight past work important to the investigation of the relationship between the forces operating on and within the commercial news media and its depictions of 21st Century protests critical of capitalism.

News Values

The first focus of this chapter is the literature on news values. News values (or news factors) (Caple and Bednarek 2013) are the guiding principles of news production. Although there is no simple definition of what constitutes news, news media personnel generally attempt to apply these values in a way that reflects the public's interest (Fuller 1996). In a seminal work on news values, Galtung and Ruge (1965) studied news coverage of the 1960 Congolese and Cuban crises and the 1964 Cyprian crisis. In doing so, they employed a content analysis of four Norwegian newspapers and found that events were more likely to be reported if they met certain news values (Galtung and Ruge 1965). These included proximity, negativity, references to persons or references to elite people (Galtung and Ruge 1965; Jewkes 2015). Although not all of these factors have to be present in order for an event to become news, Galtung and Ruge argued that "the more events satisfy the criteria mentioned, the more likely that they will be registered as news (selection)" (1965: 71). Despite this, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) asserted that many events achieve news coverage without meeting any of the news factors Galtung and Ruge identified. They also argued that identification of news factors may be more helpful in showing how an event was covered and not why it was chosen as a news story (Harcup and O'Neill 2001).

Galtung and Ruge's (1965) original study has subsequently been adapted and expanded by other authors, some of whom have taken account of specific contexts. For example, there has been a large amount of research on news values common to crime reporting. While studying the importance of violent crime to news media, Chibnall showed that journalists are guided by emphasising "visible and spectacular acts... sexual and political connotations... graphic presentation... individual pathology [and] deterrence and repression" (1977/2001: 77).

Chibnall (1977: 2001) argued that news media is more interested in focusing on violence perpetrated against strangers in public places than other forms of violence, such as domestic violence or the harm corporations inflict on workers and the environment. More recently, Jewkes (2015) defined specific news values common to crime reporting. She highlighted the importance of violence (which she claims is the news value most common to all forms of media), conflict, individualism, visual spectacle and children to news coverage of crime (Jewkes 2015). More generally, Harcup and O'Neill (2001) emphasised the importance of entertainment as a value to news media. Another important contribution discussed by Caple and Bednarek (2013) highlights the commercial aspects of news media as they argued that consideration should be given to the commercial norms and market objectives that influence news selection (Caple and Bednarek 2013). However, despite attempts to update Galtung and Ruge's original 12 news values, Caple and Bednarek (2013) have asserted that there is still considerable overlap between the different news values suggested by different authors. The literature on news values can assist in understanding the reasons why newspaper coverage of the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests focused on particular aspects of the events if the foci adhere to certain of those values.

The Public Sphere

While the selection and production of news can be determined by news values, coverage can also be determined by the role of news as a bastion of democracy. As Klaehn noted:

They are presupposed to act as intermediary vehicles that reflect public opinion, respond to public concerns and make the electorate cognizant of state policies, important events and viewpoints. The fundamental principles of

democracy depend upon the notion of a reasonably informed electorate. (2002: 147)

This can be seen as a summation of the public sphere ideal. The public sphere refers to “a discursive space in which individuals and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest, and where possible, to reach a common judgement about them” (Hauser 1999: 61). As the population is too vast to allow everybody a direct role in the public sphere, mainstream media acts as an agent to facilitate public debate (Dahlgren 1995). According to Habermas, “newspapers and magazines, radio and television are the media of the public sphere” (Habermas 1964: 49), though the internet would now be included. The importance of the internet to the public sphere is clear: “in theory each individual has direct access to a global forum where they are able to express their arguments without mediation, selection or censorship” (Ubayasiri 2006: 4). The significance of the public sphere lies in its potential to open up democratic decision making, whereby the citizenry are guaranteed a forum where they have freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions (Habermas 1964).

However, Habermas, who introduced the term, ‘public sphere’, provided a history which shows that commercial interests have now supplanted the public interest (Delanty 2007). In theory, state authority in the Europe of the late 17th and 18th Centuries, was monitored by an incipient “bourgeois” public sphere located in coffee houses and salons (Habermas 1964; Lester 2007); in the 19th Century, a commerce-dominated press emerged in England, France and the United States (Habermas 1962/1991), facilitated by the legalisation of a politically functional public sphere which allowed media owners to profit to the detriment of the public sphere. In other words, “it became the gate through which privileged private interests invaded

the public sphere” (Habermas 1962/1991: 185). The last century has seen a further weakening of the critical functions of the public sphere as large corporations have sought, and seek, political compromises with the state, attempting to exclude public scrutiny from this as much as possible (Habermas 1964). Because of this, the original conception of the public sphere as an environment constraining state and corporate power has been diminished (Eder 2005).

More recent debates on the public sphere have attempted to update the concept to reflect the context of a globalised liberal capitalist democracy (Kogler 2005). In doing so, the focus has been on an increasingly cosmopolitan public sphere in a post-national political world (Garnham 2007). This has entailed questioning the validity of the Habermasian public sphere for its implicit claims to western universality, as well as accusing it of euro-centrism (Eder 2005).

Although Habermas’s theory of the public sphere has democratic potential if realised, it is idealistic. Habermas himself conceded that “the full utopian potential of the bourgeois conception of the public sphere was never realised in practice. The claim to open access... was not made good” (Fraser 1990: 59). As a further matter, many argue that Habermas fails to take adequate account of the exclusionary role of the liberal public sphere. They contend that the deliberative public sphere, far from fostering inclusive debate actually supports domination and exclusion (Dahlgren 1995). Fraser (1990) maintained that plebeian men, racial minorities and women were excluded from participation in the public sphere. Despite the exclusiveness of Habermas’s public sphere, he does offer a useful historiography showing an evolution of the relationship between the press and the globalised market. This is important as it relates to one of the foci of the thesis: the influence of capitalism over

commercial news media reportage. Furthermore, it highlights how commercial interests of globalised corporations have limited the democratic ideal of the public sphere. The ideal of the public sphere also plays a key role in indicating what news media within a liberal democracy should aspire to in terms of allowing those with alternative perspectives to “achieve sustained involvement in public debate” (Lester 2007: 24). Moreover, criticisms of the public sphere theory can highlight the fact that marginalised groups are quite often excluded from public debate (Lester 2007).

Base and Superstructure

Although he wrote at a time when mass media was just developing (Berman 2011), Marx’s concept of the base and superstructure also offers a useful perspective on commercial news media’s relationship with capitalism by establishing that there is capitalist influence over news media. Marx’s theory is expressed in this excerpt:

The economic structure of society [is] the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. (1859: 11)

This is quite often interpreted as a theory that the economic ‘base’ of society determines the institutions which comprise the ‘superstructure’, including the parliament, educational institutions, churches and mass media (Gray 2005). In more modern times, this view of society is usually conceived as dated and simplistic (Saxonberg 2003). For example, Fiske (2004) argued that Althusser’s approach to the base and superstructure rejects economic factors. Instead, he propounded the concept of overdetermination, “which not only allows the

superstructure to influence the base but also produces a model of the relationship between ideology and culture that is not determined solely by economic relations” (Fiske 2004: 306). However, Manicas (1988) asserted that the original conception of the base and superstructure is more complex than widely thought and that no single reading is sufficient to define it. In fact, Stillman (2005) argued that Marx’s theories do not reflect an economic determinist reading of society.

Cultural Hegemony

For Gramsci, the theory of cultural hegemony stemmed from a belief that the base/superstructure relationship propounded by Marx was too simplistic (Hands 2015). He believed that, instead of the economy, it was society’s ideology-producing institutions such as schools, businesses and mass media that advocated for the hegemony of a dominant class (Hands 2015; Lull 2010). Hegemony is not only social power itself, but a method for gaining and maintaining that power (Lull 2010). This process involves institutions putting forward values, attitudes, beliefs and moralities favourable for the ruling class with an aim that they become a ‘common sense’ understanding embraced by the subordinate peoples of society, even though to do so may not work in their interests (Boggs 1980; Lull 2010). This process quite often functions through commercial news media by vilifying those who challenge the ‘common sense’ understandings being presented, which results in reinforcing the social structure (Buttigieg 2005; Jackson Lears 1985). Notwithstanding, it should not be viewed as a unified system which simply allows a dominant class to impose hegemony on subordinate classes from above. The complexity of the system is such that those involved in disseminating hegemony through commercial news media (such as journalists, public relations companies, politicians, advisers and academics) are quite often not doing it conspiratorially (Harris 2007). Because hegemony is never completely realised there is

always the potential for a counter-hegemony to be articulated which challenges the ‘common sense’ values propagated by hegemonic institutions, such as commercial news media (Meadows 2001). Ultimately, these institutions are sites of struggles over meaning and power (Lull 2010) as cultural hegemony has to be continually reinforced. This struggle for meaning is played out between ruling and subordinate groups in an ongoing attempt by each oppugnant side to ‘win’ consent from the public at large (Fernandez 2008). Lull (2010) pointed to communication forms such as popular television, rap and rock music as examples that challenge ‘common sense’ understandings of society.

The theory of cultural hegemony has several weaknesses. Gitlin (1979) suggested that, since many different ideas and values are propagated by commercial media, viewing commercial culture as manufacturing ideology favourable for a ruling class is simplistic. This is largely because commercial media quite often put forward contradictory logics which correspond with a contradictory society (Gitlin 1979). This can make it difficult to locate what, if any, ‘common sense’ understandings are presented by commercial media. Instead, Gitlin argued that cultural hegemony operates in a more complex way than much of the literature suggests: “Commercial culture relays and reproduces and processes and packages and focuses ideology that is constantly arising both from social elites and from active social groups and movements throughout the society” (1979: 253). As a result of this, it can be difficult to analyse how cultural hegemony is evident through the news texts analysed for the case studies. Altheide (1984) argued, in contrast to the theory of cultural hegemony, asserting that news reports regularly challenge the status quo by being agents of change in many instances. Although the concept of a ruling class making use of commercial media to put forward an agenda favourable for itself is now considered simplistic, analysis of cultural hegemony can nonetheless identify the inequities of power displayed through commercial news media

reportage. This can entail a focus on the opportunities given to disadvantaged or marginalised individuals, who challenge cultural hegemony to insert their voices within news reportage. As well as this, it can locate the strategies through which cultural hegemony is sought and secured. In the case studies central in this thesis, the position of groups dissenting from ‘common sense’ understandings of capitalism can be located when they attempt to insert their counter-definitions into news reportage. Their depiction by commercial news media can be analysed from this.

In relation to the cultural hegemonic function of commercial news media, Gramsci defined the press – “publishing houses, political newspapers, periodicals of every kind” – as the most dynamic part of an ideological structure (Meadows 2001: 12-13). Wayne (2003) drew on Gramsci’s ideas when analysing the power imbalance of modern news coverage. He wrote of hegemony that the winning of a ruling class’s consent is at its heart a “cultural battle”, which is constantly being fought out across a range of social institutions such as electoral politics, schools and media (Wayne 2003). Wayne illustrated the latter with the example of the British *Daily Mail*’s coverage of striking airport staff. In analysing the hegemonic apparatus of commercial news media, he used a semantics analysis of the news text’s title, *Union Militants are Back and the Next Target is Your Holiday*, to highlight the perceived aggression and violence that comes with the word “militants” (2003: 169). Wayne suggested there is an implied direct threat against the newspaper’s (presumably) middle class readers, achieved by the use of the possessive noun “your holiday” (2003: 169). This creates an illusion that the ‘greedy’ strikers somehow sought to not only disrupt, but to actively constrain holidaymakers rather than that they were taking legitimate actions to improve their working conditions. It was not until the end of the news text that an attempt to be objective was made, by the newspaper calling attention to the slight pay rise of 1.5 percent being offered by the airline’s

employers and the bleak fact that the workers live in the most expensive part of the country (Wayne 2003). Wayne referred to this brief concession as “a weak gesture towards ‘balance’” (2003: 169). Although cultural hegemony principally benefits and perpetuates the status of the ruling group, Wayne (2003) was cognisant that it can be the site of contestation of meaning.

The importance of Wayne’s analysis lies in his finding that *The Daily Mail* was unfavourable for the striking airport staff who had attempted to insert their definitions into news coverage. Although Wayne’s concern was with class representation, as opposed to the case studies central in this thesis which do not focus on class, his study manages to show how there may be some attempt at equality of reporting made by commercial newspapers but that this can be nullified by predominantly negative characterisations of the protesting group that challenge the cultural hegemony of capitalism.

Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)

Commercial news media’s characterisation of subordinate groups within the capitalist system is important because it can reflect a particular ideology. Although there is ambiguity concerning the conflation of hegemony and ideology (Wayne 2003), in this thesis, they are approached as two separate but interwoven ideas. Cultural hegemony is viewed as a means, via a contestation of ideas, of attempting to instil an ideology through commercial news media. Influenced by Gramsci’s theory that cultural apparatuses attempt to make hegemony acceptable, Althusser neologised the term “ideological state apparatuses” (ISAs) (Mattei 2003: 387). This idea draws attention to the function of institutions such as the political system, law, schools and media in constructing a particular belief system which perpetuates

the existing social structure without needing to resort to coercion (unlike repressive state apparatuses such as the police or army) (Althusser 1971; Mattei: 2003). ISAs function by addressing individuals as subjects, which positions those individuals to accept a particular role in society. Althusser (1971) termed this process “interpellation”. He used this term to explain the process in which individuals are presented with society’s values, internalise them and consequently their identities are formed (Abercrombie 2006; McGee 2014). In this way, the theory goes beyond the traditional Marxist idea of ideology as a class-specific device (Mattei 2003). Althusser argued that all ISAs perform the same function: they reproduce the capitalist system. In respect to the communications apparatus, he argued this is achieved by “cramming every ‘citizen’ with daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism, etc., by means of the press, the radio and television” (Althusser 1971: 104). Those who rebel against dominant ideologies (known as “bad subjects”) are presumably met with hostility by ISAs as, according to Gray (2005), “bad subjects... are ‘punished’ through mainstream societal ridicule, obsequy [sic], or ostracism”.

Some authors have criticised the ISA theory. Bennett asserted that Althusser’s theory – which, unlike cultural hegemony, discounts class conflict – is almost functionalist (Bennett 1982), because “by viewing all ideological forms as contributing to the reproduction of existing social relationships, it tends to represent capitalism as a totally coherent social system (one-dimensional even)” (Bennett 1982: 52-53). It has also been claimed that the idea of a dominant ideology influencing media practices and processes has been discredited (Meadows 2001). Despite this, Wright and Roberts (2013) have argued that Althusser was aware that reproduction of the existing social system through ISAs is not always guaranteed as there are contradictions present in this process which threaten capitalism’s continued survival.

In making this argument, Wright and Roberts (2013) analysed the role of television in interpellating audiences. They used the case study of children's television programmes to investigate the functioning of the medium as an ISA. Their study compared three recent children's public television shows, *Thomas & Friends*, *Barney & Friends* and *Bob the Builder*, to the older programme, *Sesame Street*. In doing so, they showed how these programmes legitimate the contemporary capitalist system, referred to by the authors as "neoliberalism" (Wright and Roberts 2013). The authors found that, although the three newer programs unambiguously interpellated children to accept the contemporary economic system by reflecting it as a 'common sense' value, *Sesame Street* is more contradictory. They argued that *Sesame Street* presents a less favourable view of capitalism than the other programs, as characters such as Grover seem to take little pleasure in their multiple jobs (his reason for doing them is simply to make a living). Yet *Sesame Street* is hardly antithetical towards neoliberalism. It does, for example, normalise the division of labour, and the distinction between work and leisure, both of which are conducive to the continuation of the capitalist system (Wright and Roberts 2013). Ultimately, the theorists argued, "children's programmes present cultural values and economic conditions as taken for granted or 'obvious'" (Wright and Roberts 2013). Although there are occasional inconsistent messages (as seen in *Sesame Street*) which reveal the contradictions of the system, the authors argued that the programmes ultimately legitimate and normalise the neoliberal system through interpellation.

Similarly, Brennen (2000) used the example of the Clinton administration's 'war on drugs' of the 1990s to show how commercial news media can be used to put forward a particular ideological message. In this case, the government was able to insert an anti-drug message into

a plethora of public service advertisements and, more implicitly, into network television programmes (Brennen 2000). Although neither this study nor Wright and Roberts's (2013), shows how commercial news media characterises protesters critical of capitalism, they do exemplify the role of the communications apparatus in putting forward messages favourable for the contemporary capitalist system and show the extent to which a government is able to define the news agenda.

Primary and Secondary Definers

This last point, concerning the ability of governments to impact news framing, is the central concern of the work of Hall et al. (1978/2013). They argued that media discourse is affected by elite voices given credence through commercial news media. They called attention to this with the idea of "primary and secondary definers" (Hall et al. 1978/2013: 60). Primary definers refer to individuals or institutions granted considerable access to media to affect discourse (these may be elite or non-elite sources, however they are generally the former) (Hall et al. 1978/2013). News media is considered to be a secondary definer because it tends to repeat the definitions set by the primary definers (Hall et al. 1978/2013). Hall et al. argued that the reliance of commercial news media on elite primary definers is due to pressures such as time constraints, tight resource allocation, and work scheduling which makes "pre-scheduled events" organised by news sources appealing (1978/2013: 60). This reliance is also influenced by entrenched values, such as that news media should be "balanced" and "impartial" which "gives rise to the practice of ensuring that media statements are... grounded in "objective" and "authoritative" statements from "accredited sources" (Hall et al. 1978/2013: 61).

Hall et al. (1978/2013) used the case study of crime reporting (which they claimed is more dependent on crime control institutions than on other areas of reporting) to argue that commercial news media has a heavy dependence on elite voices. As they wrote: “the police, home office spokesmen and the courts form a near-monopoly as sources of crime news in the media” (Hall et al. 1978/2013: 71). Hall et al. referenced American sociologist Howard S. Becker in bringing to attention a “hierarchy of credibility” (1978/2013: 61). This means that, in hierarchical societies, people tend to believe that elites have a right to define reality because they are seen as more informed on particular topics than the rest of society (Becker 1967; Hall et al. 1978/2013). This hierarchy is obvious in commercial news media, as much reportage tends to heavily utilise official voices, thus legitimating their hold over affairs of state and the system they operate within (Hall et al. 1978/2013). This pattern of source selection, according to Cross (2010), creates a situation where commercial news media coverage is informed by conversations between the powerful, which relegates the general public to a mere observer role. The theory of primary and secondary definers can be seen as having been influenced by Gramsci’s concept of cultural hegemony, as definitions that run counter to those set by the definers, when articulated, fall within certain social parameters favourable for a ruling class (Schlesinger 1990).

Schlesinger (1990) claimed that one of the weaknesses of Hall et al.’s (1978/2013) work is that they ignored both the framing that the social situation imposes on primary definers and downplayed the initiative taken by news media in framing discourse. The primary and secondary definer theory is also problematic because it assumes that political actors are immediately granted access to news coverage by virtue of their position in the social structure (Schlesinger 1990). This ignores the fact that not all primary definers are given equal access to news coverage at all times, and also neglects the existence of competition between elite

and non-elite sources (Negrine 1996; Schlesinger 1990). Furthermore, Cross (2010) levelled the criticism that the theory cannot fully explain diversity and disparity among news sources, questioning how the theory is able to account for the use of so-called non-elite independent experts or the presence of vox pops in coverage. Another charge made by Schlesinger (1990) is that it groups together all primary definers, failing to take into account that there can be differences of opinion between sources, even from the same organisation.

Despite these perceived flaws, the theory of primary and secondary definers is still useful in studying news coverage of protests. This is because of the focus this reportage tends to have on official sources who are often placed in opposition to protesters (as discussed below) and who also tend to have significant influence over the framing of the protest reportage. In this way, the theory can guide an investigation of how primary definers contribute to establishing the parameters of messages conveyed by news coverage and the effectiveness of counter-definitions challenging these parameters. Furthermore, Hall et al's (1978/2013) theory can emphasise the distinctions between primary definers and counter-definers in the case studies central in this thesis, as well as the reasons why particular voices (mostly institutional voices) are able to more strongly inform the frames of news coverage over other marginalised voices with opposing views. The analysis in this thesis will focus closely on source selection in the news texts and how the reliance on particular voices affected the characterisations of the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests in newspaper coverage.

A predominance of elite voices can contribute to a lack of multiple viewpoints, threatening the democratic potential of commercial news media. Bowers (2011) made this argument while looking at news media coverage of the 2009 G20 protests in London. He performed a

content analysis of the four leading United Kingdom newspapers (*The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Financial Times*, and *The Guardian/The Observer*) in order to assess the relationship between what he called “non-elite sources” and journalists (2011: 116). In total, he analysed 247 news texts from both the daily and Sunday editions of the publications (Bowers 2011). The results showed an overreliance on what Bowers termed “elite sources”, and comparatively minimal engagement with either non-elite sources or the views of political analysts or their equivalent (Bowers 2011). Bowers (2011) found that 79 percent of the quotes across all stories were derived from elite sources while the remaining 21 percent were spread among the other groups. He found that the quotes from those not connected to a primary institution were given substantially less news text than those of elite sources (Brown 2011). This study highlights the trend found by other theorists demonstrating that reporters rely heavily on official sources for information (Noakes and Gillham 2006). In doing so, Bowen’s (2011) study builds upon the work of Hall et al. (1978/2013) in showing that elite sources are privileged above non-elite sources. This is important to this thesis because it suggests that commercial news media may tend to favour the voices of elites over non-elites (such as protesters).

A contribution to the research on commercial news media’s reliance on elite voices is found in work showing that the police establishment has significant impact over news representations of law and order. This is a consequence of a symbiosis that exists between commercial news media and police public relations departments. McGovern and Lee (2010) identified this with a study which compared the content of crime and police-related news texts in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* with press releases published by the NSW Police Media Unit (PMU) on the NSW Police website in March 2005. The authors sought to identify the number of stories which were mainly paraphrased from

accounts given by the NSW PMU. Their study found that 35 percent of all *Telegraph* crime stories and 33 percent of all *Herald* crime stories were paraphrased from police press releases (McGovern and Lee 2010). As a consequence of the news frame presented by police being adopted and replication within the news texts, the actions of the police were represented positively (McGovern and Lee 2010). Dowler defined the favourable portrayal of officers in news media as “heroic, professional crime fighter[s]”. Dowler asserted that this portrayal is a consequence of focusing on proactive police activity (2002: 228). He claimed that favourable depictions of policing such as these are connected to the police establishment’s public relations strategy (Dowler 2002). The scholarship depicts the relationship between commercial news media and the police as mutually beneficial. As Dowler and Zawilski explained, “the police have an interest in preserving a positive public image, while the reporters require quick, reliable, and relatively easy sources of crime news” (2007: 194).

Despite the impact of this relationship on coverage, not all reportage presents police positively. The relationship between media and police can be contentious because while media can allow police to communicate information that represents them favourably, it can also scrutinise them (Mawby 1999). Weitzer (2002) focused on scrutiny of police actions and showed that negative representations of police can affect the public consciousness. His study was concerned with the public’s attitudes towards police after major incidents of police misconduct in New York and Los Angeles. Weitzer (2002) derived his data from polls conducted by both of these cities’ major newspapers, *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*. The results showed that the public had an unfavourable view of police immediately after a heavily publicised incident of misconduct, but that this tended to taper off over time (Weitzer 2002). This result shows that commercial newspapers can portray police negatively, despite the broadly positive relationship between police and media (Dowler and

Zawilski 2007). Because police figure prominently in the case studies for this thesis, this literature is useful as it reveals a symbiosis between police and commercial news media which at least partly explains their predominantly positive characterisations in news coverage. Furthermore, it also reveals that reportage can depict police unfavourably.

Political Economy Approach

A dominant trend in media analysis is to trumpet the relationship between broadcasting and market forces. This is generally referred to as the ‘political economy’ approach to media analysis. The political economy approach is outlined by McChesney, who described it as “a field that endeavours to connect how media and communication systems and content are shaped by ownership, market structures, commercial support, technologies, labour practices, and government policies” (2008: 12).

Herman and Chomsky (1988) were the most significant early contributors to this area of study. They contended that mainstream media’s primary role is to disseminate propaganda favourable for the ruling elite. They argued this using a paradigm they called the “propaganda model”. This model is comprised of five filters.

The first looks at media ownership, arguing that the market from the 19th Century onwards has been effective in weakening the radical working class press. This is a result of free market expansion and an “industrialisation of the press” limiting the scope of ownership to those who can afford it (Herman and Chomsky 1988: 8).

The second filter is concerned with the power of advertising. Herman and Chomsky argued that the quest for profitability constrains the alternative working class press while giving undue advantages to commercial media. The power of advertisers is such that mainstream media is increasingly given over to “entertaining” its audiences for profit as opposed to informing them in line with what Herman and Chomsky referred to as media’s ‘correct role’ (1988: 298). Media is so dependent on advertisers that they must toe the ideological line of their sponsors (usually conservative and pro-business) (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

The third filter concerns media sources, and correlates with the conception of primary definers. The writers argued that economic and time constraints necessitate mainstream media using credible, official sources who are easy to access (Herman and Chomsky 1988). This system is undemocratic as these sources are usually big institutions with the means to utilise the public relations industry to influence the heavily reliant media. Media is reluctant to question their established sources as they want to avoid alienating them (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

The fourth filter is referred to as “enforcing flak” (Herman and Chomsky 1988: 26). This encapsulates the process of corporations pressuring mainstream media to be more “right wing” (Herman and Chomsky 1988: 26). The authors claimed that mainstream media is broadly supportive of right wing corporations, rarely critiquing their influence (Herman and Chomsky 1988).

The final filter calls attention to mainstream media's anti-communism. This filter is referred to as "the bad other" in updated versions (Corner 2003: 369). Mainstream media helps to mobilise the public against a common enemy by paying particular attention to Soviet, Chinese and Cuban human rights abuses by tapping into the public's vague conception of communism. This undermines even those of the moderate American left who may be accused of being communists if they advocate even moderate left wing reforms of the economic, social or political systems. The aim of this is to frighten them into conformity (Herman and Chomsky 1988). In the words of the theorists, the propaganda model shows that commercial news media serves to "inculcate and defend the economic, social and political cause of privileged groups that dominate the domestic society and the state" (Herman and Chomsky 1988: 298).

Entman (1990) claimed that Herman and Chomsky's views of news media were sometimes conspiratorial on the basis of several alleged weaknesses in the theory of the propaganda model. Herman and Chomsky have been accused of ignoring competing agendas by downplaying the impediments posed by popular opposition to the functioning of the third, fourth and fifth filters in particular (Mullen and Klaehn 2010). Mullen and Klaehn argued that Herman and Chomsky also failed to take into account the plurality of commercial news media as they conceived of news media as a monolithic system putting forward a homogenous ideology, a view comparable to Althusser's concept of the communications ISA. Salmon (1989) asserted that this fails to take into account publications that provide competing frames and facts of a more left wing nature, such as *The Guardian* or *The Nation*. Another criticism is that the propaganda model implicitly assumes audiences to be passive receivers of news and easily manipulated, failing to theorise about audience effects (Klaehn 2002; 2009). Lehrer argued that despite the influence possessed by a "small clique of profit-

oriented companies” (2004: 69), the model posits that their power is used to further political rather than commercial interests. Lehrer took issue with this, arguing that it seems unlikely that media owners “would put politics ahead of profit and risk suffering a shareholder revolt” (2004: 70). Despite its flaws, the model contributes an understanding of the ideological underpinning of commercial news media within a liberal capitalist democracy. It is also important in the context of the case studies in this thesis, because it highlights the difficulties that those attempting to put forward a counter-hegemony face in challenging the capitalist system.

Media Ownership

Many theorists have criticised the state of media ownership. One reason for this is because it is thought to allow media barons to influence the publications they own for the purpose of self-aggrandisement. For example, former Prime Minister of Italy Silvio Berlusconi’s ownership of three television stations was found to have greatly influenced the public to vote for his party at the 1994 national elections (Doyle 2002). However, the theory that owners directly influence coverage of their media outlets is limited. This is because it is, “the routines of journalism, set within the economic and political interests of the news organisations... [which] combine to select certain versions of reality over others” (Gitlin 1980: 4). This makes a focus on the corporate structure of commercial news media particularly important. The argument is that the corporate structure, because of its underlying profit-making purpose, threatens the ideals of news media serving the public interest by delivering objective news (Schultz 1998).

Bagdikian (2004) made the case that the objectivity of American commercial media is jeopardised by corporate ownership. Because the primary motivation of these media conglomerates is to make a profit, there is an unhealthy reliance on advertising (which is the main way newspapers make money) (2004). Bagdikian highlighted the enduring influence of the real estate, fashion, travel, food and tobacco industries over news coverage, arguing that American newspapers constantly print content favourable for companies selling these products. Although he conceded that newspapers are not as beholden to advertisers as was the case 30 years ago, Bagdikian (2004) asserted information that advertisers may consider offensive is still quite often censored. Because of this, Couldry has pointed to the increasing centrality of profit-motive among owners of news media: “gone is the notion that a newspaper should lead, that it has an obligation to its community, that it is beholden to the public” (2010: 87). Bagdikian suggested that this trend weakens democracy; information that may interfere with corporations maximising their profits or that may offend advertisers is omitted by news media (Bagdikian 2004). He seems to make the point that this leads to radical left voices, such as Noam Chomsky’s, being excluded from commercial media discourse (Bagdikian 2004). In a similar vein to Bagdikian, Exoo (2010) argued that corporations are more interested in making a profit, rather than delivering news in line with the aforementioned ideals of media. The ultimate detriment of corporatist ownership is that it sees a “narrowing in the diversity of political opinions available to the public via the media” (Doyle 2002: 20).

This is particularly concerning for commercial news media in Australia as print media ownership is much more highly concentrated than in most other western countries (Harding-Smith 2011). With 91 percent of Australian newspapers controlled by either the News Limited or Fairfax corporations (Harding-Smith 2011), the subjects of public debate can be

largely determined by these two organisations. As this situation is coupled with an almost equally restricted ownership of television networks and capital city radio stations, Denemark (2005) has said that commercial news media in Australia is under monopoly or semi-monopoly conditions. Recent developments indicate that ownership might become yet more concentrated as the rule against television stations broadcasting to more than 75 percent of the country lapses, allowing free-to-air media companies to buy into hitherto regional broadcasters (Yaxley 2015). The restricted nature of Australian media ownership is problematic because it can give particular media barons significant influence over the political landscape (Manning 1976). This is usually achieved indirectly through the hiring of editors and other personnel who agree, or comply, with the views of their bosses (Chadwick 1989). The semi-monopoly position of Australian commercial news media is demonstrated by the influence of Rupert Murdoch over Australian news media; his News Limited Corporation covers well over 50 percent of the market in capital cities (Lidberg and Hirst 2013). Because of this, Lidberg and Hirst describe News Limited as having a “virtual stranglehold on the Australian newspaper market” (2013: 115). This is troubling because the corporation has been shown to defend the side of politics that best represents its commercial interests (Lidberg and Hirst 2013). The challenges this structure poses to the democratic potential of commercial news media are substantial. The reduction of diversity of news sources weakens the liberal ideal of commercial news media (Chadwick 1989; McGuinness 1990).

Concentrated ownership can be disadvantageous for Australian protests critical of capitalism, such as the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests, because their causes tend to be antithetical to the capitalist system that benefits media owners (Lull 2010). The research discussed in this section is highly relevant to the case studies of this thesis, because it focuses

on the erosion of the ideal of media plurality, which can impact on portrayals of protests critical of the capitalist system upon which the corporate media relies.

Protest Characterisations

As a large number of protests tend to be critical of the capitalist system, it is important to analyse the scholarship that examines the approach commercial news media takes towards these events. News media's characterisation of 21st Century protests critical of capitalism can reflect the impact capitalism has on commercial news coverage. Due to the comparatively minimal academic work on these kinds of protests, some of the following studies focus on the way that protests with causes other than critiquing capitalism are represented by commercial news media.

Theorists consistently point to the trend in commercial news media of presenting protests negatively. Gitlin (1980), one of the most influential authors to contribute to the field, analysed the coverage of the American New Left, mainly the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), focusing on the approach commercial news media took to SDS's protest activity during the 1960s. Gitlin found that although the movement was burgeoning in 1965-1966, it was largely ignored by news media when it set up its first major national organisation against the Vietnam War (Gitlin 1980). Initially, the SDS seems not to have been considered newsworthy because it did not engage in flamboyant actions or mobilise large groups of people (Gitlin 1980). As it received more attention, commercial news media's negative characterisation of the group became apparent. For example, the first mention of the SDS by *The New York Times* covered the arrest of 14 of its members, and implied that it was simply

an “anti-war organisation” (Gitlin 1980: 34). This ignored the other issues which informed its cause, such as university reform, civil rights and community organising (Gitlin 1980).

Another common negative depiction disseminated by commercial news media associated the group with the Vietcong, thereby linking them to the enemy of the United States. This was achieved by emphasising particular protesters who brandished the Vietcong’s flag (Gitlin 1980: 4, 140). Gitlin argued that the characterisations of the SDS that prevailed showed that commercial news media tends to focus on the most extreme forms of protest behaviour. He writes: “It was obvious... that the media [was] giving lurid prominence to the wildest and most cacophonous rhetoric, and broadcasting the most violent, bizarre, and discordant actions” (Gitlin 1980: 182).

In a similar vein, McLeod’s (2000) work on the American ‘Right to Party’ movement shows that the American press was hostile to University students whose aim was to protest against the policies placing prohibitions and restrictions on the size and location of parties. The protesters were given epithets by the press such as “hordes of drunken yahoos” and “brick throwing mob” (2000: 35). Negative labelling, having the effect of constructing negative attitudes, delegitimised the protesters (McLeod 2000). Ultimately, this characterisation shifted attention away from the concerns the students had about the policies of their universities (McLeod 2000). With coverage like this, it is understandable that some contemporary protest groups tend to distrust commercial news media (Krastev 2014).

Undoubtedly contributing to this view are findings that actions of protesters, as opposed to their cause, routinely become the focus of news coverage (Scalmer 2002). Scalmer illustrates this in his work on the protests elicited by the notorious dismissal of Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in 1975. He pointed to news texts from *The Daily Mirror* and *Sunday Telegraph*, using them as examples of the editorial line that the Murdoch-owned newspapers

took towards the pro-democracy protesters. The newspapers either pointed to the counterproductive nature of the protests, to their aggressiveness or (in the case of *The Sunday Telegraph*) equated their actions with those of criminals (Scalmer 2002). Scalmer, on the basis of these findings, stated: “The wider cause [of protests] will be sullied and trivialised [by news media]” (2002: 140).

A conclusion of much research on commercial news media finds that protesters are primarily represented as dangerous. Ward (1995) argued that it is news media’s reliance on foregrounding conflict that causes protesters to be portrayed in this way. He explained:

News coverage of direct political action commonly demonises those who organise and take part in extra parliamentary politics. They are [represented as] militant and unrepresentative minorities whose disregard for mainstream political processes poses something of a threat to civil order. (Ward 1995: 272)

Donson et al. found a tendency for news media to connect anti-capitalist protesters to extreme violence and even criminality, which frames them as “folk devils” (2004: 2, 9). The term ‘folk devil’ was originally used by Cohen to refer to groups such as the Teddy Boys and the Mods and Rockers who were associated with violence and other disapproved forms of behaviour; groups “which society erects to show its members which roles should be avoided... visible reminders of what we should not be” (1972/2011: 2). Similarly Donson et al. (2004) define the ‘folk devil’ as someone considered to be “evil and deviant. Their behaviour is harmful to the social order and understood simply as being criminal and/or

destructive to the interests of society” (2004: 3). These groups are labelled, because of this, as outsiders to the established social, political or economic system (Donson et al. 2004). The authors analysed the coverage of the 2000 and 2001 London May Day anti-capitalist protests, finding that the protests were represented by the newspapers as if they were mainly composed of folk devils (Donson et al. 2004). Despite the fact that the May Day protests at Parliament Square were conducted reasonably peacefully, titles such as “Anarchy thugs riot in central London” and “Protests erupt in violence” predominated (2004: 11-12). The theorists argue that this framing contributed to anticipation in the coverage leading up to the 2001 protest that it would be made up largely of anarchists. The coverage focused on police who believed the anarchists intended to cause violence, which was furthered by newspaper reports claiming that the protesters would be in their thousands, carry samurai swords and have links with the Real IRA (Donson et al. 2004). Donson et al. (2004) partly attributed this characterisation to the tendency of commercial news media to be concerned above all with circulation figures and market share. This contributes to the sensationalising of reporting (Donson et al. 2004), which presumably makes news more profitable.

Although it appears that the authors attributed such negative emphasis to the reliance the news has on broadcasting events in a ‘newsworthy’ (thus profitable) fashion, they actually went beyond this imputation. Instead, they posited that the characterisations of dangerousness featured in the newspapers were an implicit attempt to silence alternative views of the neoliberal capitalist system (Donson et al. 2004). Although it is true that commercial news media operates within certain social, political and economic parameters which excludes particular voices from its coverage, it is important not to ascribe this to conspiracy theories (Boykoff 2006). Boykoff specifically attributed negative characterisations of protests and protesters, such as those outlined above, not to conscious conspiracies to undermine them but

to “journalistic norms and values such as personalisation, dramatisation, fragmentation and the authority-order bias” (2006: 227-228). Notwithstanding, the research conducted by Donson et al. (2004) shows that the news’ focus on the threatening and violent aspects of protests critical of capitalism can outweigh the messages protesters seek to convey. The analysis and discussion chapter will address whether there was a comparable framing of the dangerousness of the City Square or Brisbane G20.

According to Berger, the construction of the dangerous protester is amplified by a media which emphasises violence because “violence sells newspapers” (1989: 48-49). This emphasis in regard to protests is made apparent by commercial news media, which regularly employs an episodic focus on arrests and the violent acts of specific protesters or protest events (Smith et al. 2001). While analysing newspaper coverage of the 2010 UK student protests against the Government’s plans to cut University funding and increase the cap on tuition fees, Cammaerts (2013) found that most news texts addressed or mentioned violence in some way. While the established right wing newspapers (*The Daily Mail* and *The Daily Telegraph*) tended to attribute violence to the protesters, those considered to be on the left (*The Guardian* and *The Independent*) generally gave more attention to violent actions of the police or were more balanced in their approach to attributing violence to either protesters or police (Cammaerts 2013). In spite of this, Cammaerts found that all of the newspapers, right- or left-leaning, primarily used violence to negatively characterise the protests, regardless of whether they were imputing that violence to protesters or to the police (2013: 16). Although Cammaerts found that the right wing newspapers framed protesters as primary instigators of violence and the left wing newspapers emphasised both protester and police violence, other researchers have argued that commercial news media generally tends to shift from focusing on protest violence to police violence as stories develop (Schulenberg and Chenier 2014).

This was not a conclusion made by Cammaerts however. Instead, he found that the newspapers were consistently attracted to acts of violence which occurred during the protest. Cammaerts (2013) argued that the protesters were effectively forced into perpetrating violence in order to have their voices heard as a result of the failure of liberal democracy to give alternative views coverage through news media. This study establishes that violence is a central focus of news media and that the newsworthiness of violence can give marginalised groups a voice, albeit a limited one. This leads into interesting lines of inquiry for the case studies central in this thesis.

Over the last couple of decades, protests critical of capitalism have become increasingly concerned with issues connected to globalisation. The contemporary protest groups featured in the case studies central in this thesis, which are informed by criticisms of globalised capitalism, attest to this. Although not unheard of in the past (Van Aelst and Walgrave 2002), current protest movements are taking on an increasingly globalised outlook. As a result, these groups tend to organise protests at influential world trade conferences in order to mount critiques against the policies of international economic institutions. The role of commercial news media in framing these protests quite often takes on an inimical quality. As the most influential institutions directing globalised economies, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are often the subjects of groups critical of their “prioritising [of] unfettered trade over worker rights, consumer safety, and the environment” (Boykoff 2006: 207) as well as of their perceived undemocratic and elitist approach to world issues. In analysing coverage of the A16 protests in Washington, D.C. and ‘The Battle of Seattle’ by six major newspapers and five influential television networks, Boykoff (2006) found that the primary frames used to characterise the events were the “violence” frame, the “disruption” frame, the “freak” frame, the “ignorance” frame, and the

“amalgam of grievances” frame (2006: 211-220). The prominence of these frames obscured the protests’ purposes (Boykoff 2006). Agreeing with the findings of Boykoff (2006), McLaren (2001) was of the view that, from the beginning of modern globalised protest movements in 1999, there has been a pattern of commercial news media and official sources misinforming the public about protester actions. In contrast to this, Beyeler and Kriesi (2005) have argued that ‘anti-globalisation’ protests were initially covered sympathetically by commercial newspapers, but that in more recent years there has been a shift in reporting, focusing more on the sensationalist aspects and less on protesters’ causes.

Contrary to these findings is the view that newspapers can cover protests favourably, meaning that protesters are able to overcome the obstacles hindering their abilities to insert their causes within coverage. Outlined by DeLuca and Peeples (2002), these obstacles are private ownership (as corporations restrict what messages can get into commercial media), infotainment (which filters out what constitutes news), and the necessity to communicate imagery. Some studies have found that, although commercial news media may initially emphasise the violence or chaos of protest events, there tends to be a subsequent shift to detailing the issues at play (Rojecki 2002). This contributes to the discourse concerning “the extent to which the less powerful and politically marginal can obtain media access” (Atton and Wickendam 2005: 347).

DeLuca and Peeples address this via a case study on the WTO protests held in Seattle in 2000. The theorists specifically focused on the importance of spectacle to the protests. They found that the protest organisers had intended to create, through spectacle, an environment which would shift the focus from the cause of the WTO onto their cause. They sought to

achieve this by transforming downtown Seattle “into a festival of resistance with mass nonviolent direct action, marches, street theatre, music and celebration” (DeLuca and Peeples 2002: 137-138). DeLuca and Peeples argued that this did not go to plan. The intended peaceful march was infiltrated by violent anarchists which contributed to the news framing of the event as violent and chaotic (DeLuca and Peeples 2002). Despite this, the authors did not conclude that the framing was wholly unfavourable for the protesters. Instead, they argued that the initial focus on violence led to an expansive emphasis on the issues surrounding the event (DeLuca and Peeples 2002). In fact, they went so far as to state that, without the violence drawing the initial coverage, because “the news is attracted to disturbers of order and deviation from the routine” (DeLuca and Peeples 2002: 138), there would not have been engagement with the protester’s cause at all. DeLuca and Peeples’ findings show the strategies that protesters sometimes adopt in order to receive media attention. The Seattle WTO protesters’ success in inserting their cause into the news despite an initially unfavourable characterisation is not the universal experience of ‘anti-globalisation’ protest coverage however.

Because it is difficult for protests to generate coverage from commercial news media, it is necessary for protesters to employ spectacle in order to gain attention (Lester 2007; Scalmer 2002). This is problematic because protesters have to be disruptive enough to gain news media attention, but peaceful enough to avoid any hint of violence (Scalmer 2002). Many authors have contended that this focus on spectacle can actually work against protester interests. Craig (2002) referred to the Melbourne counterpart to the Seattle WTO protests, pointing to the initially negative and often disdainful coverage which focused on the violence of the event. He asserted that the spectacle engendered by the protesters’ actions provoked media interest in the issues motivating the ‘anti-globalisation’ protest, such as “lack of

democratic accountability, degradation of the environment, cruel and exploitative labour practices and international debt structures” (Craig 2002: 43). However, ultimately he argued that this created a difficulty for protesters; they not only had to create a public disturbance to receive news attention but also had to maintain a sense of control over the spectacle so that they could not be characterised negatively. Similarly, Juris (2005) called attention to the fact that protesters quite often consciously engage in violent or destructive behaviours to increase their chances of receiving coverage. However, this is risky because “at the same time, police and government officials can use the same images to delegitimise protesters” (Juris 2005: 414). Thus, news media can reinterpret rational protester actions as senseless violence. This, argued Craig (2002), indicates there is no guarantee that protesters’ actions will be framed positively. Indeed, he found that the focus on clashes between Melbourne WTO protesters and police misrepresented the tone of the protest from the outset (Craig 2002).

The purpose of this chapter was to offer a review of the literature that is relevant to and informs the case studies central in this thesis. The literature review presented research related to the issue of how protests are characterised by commercial news media. This not only highlighted studies which focus on international protests with a cause critical of capitalism, but also protests with other causes. The overall finding was that commercial news media typically frames protests negatively by focusing on violent and disorderly episodes. It was argued by multiple authors that this generally leads to ignoring the purposes behind protests. Conversely, some authors argued that commercial news media does allow protesters to insert their causes into news coverage. There was also literature focusing on the secondary definer role of news media which theorised that news media merely communicates the assertions of primary definers, such as the government and police, in an uncritical way.

The chapter also reviewed scholarship on the role of commercial within a liberal capitalist democracy. Through a focus on the Habermasian public sphere, the literature review showed that commercial news media has the potential to foster democratic debate among the public concerning the political issues of the day, although it was also suggested that this potential of commercial news media is rarely achieved. This failure is due to a combination of factors. Most pronounced among these is the influence that the capitalist system is said to have on news coverage. The literature review foregrounded research on media's relationship with the capitalist system, highlighting authors who have asserted that news media in a capitalist system presents a 'common sense' understanding of the world reflective of that system. The concepts of cultural hegemony, ISAs and the propaganda model were propounded as theories demonstrating this. As reflected in the literature, many authors have stated that private media ownership, which, in Australia, is highly concentrated, further contributes to the hindering of the democratic role of news media by reducing the plurality of views. Literature focusing on the main news values that guide news production were also reviewed. A framing analysis comparing the reviewed literature to the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests will be presented in the analysis and discussion chapter. The next chapter contains a detailed discussion of framing and its application to the central case studies in this thesis.

Approach and Methods

“Everyone from *The New York Times* to Rupert Murdoch has a point of view and is putting forth their own propaganda. They’re stuck with the facts as they are but the way they interpret and frame them is wildly different.” – Frank Miller (Boucher 2011)

This chapter shows how the news texts of the case studies have been gathered for analysis as well as discussing the literature on news framing. In doing so, it demonstrates which news texts were investigated for the framing analysis and establishes the reasons behind selecting them. This chapter details the data collection process and contains an overview of the literature on news framing. The most common types of framing used in news media are identified and defined in order for them to be applied to the City Square and Brisbane G20 protest case studies. The strengths and limitations of a framing analysis are also considered.

The central concern of this thesis is the way in which Australian commercial news media characterises 21st Century protests critical of capitalism and whether those who take part in these protests are able to insert their causes into the news coverage. This was addressed by an analysis of the newspaper reportage elicited by the Melbourne City Square and Brisbane G20 protests. Because these protests raise issues concerning capitalism, it is important to assess the coverage provided by a commercial news media operating within a capitalist system.

Investigating how the protests are characterised by newspapers can indicate, to some extent, whether the capitalist system affects the reporting. The Melbourne City Square and Brisbane G20 protests have been chosen for analysis as they are the most palpable recent examples of protest critical of capitalism in Australia. Because the thesis investigates the characterisations offered by Australian newspapers, it is beneficial to use two case studies from the relevant nation. This is because local news is more likely to receive more publicity than reportage of similar protest events eventuating elsewhere as reflected by the news value of proximity

(Galtung and Ruge 1965). A majority of the newspapers chosen for analysis reflected this: the two newspapers which devoted the largest number of news texts to the protests were both based in the cities where the protests happened. Coverage of the City Square protest was analysed by looking at news texts in *The Age*, *The Herald Sun*, and *The Australian*. For the Brisbane G20 protests, *The Courier Mail*, *Brisbane Times* and *The Australian* were chosen. *The Australian* was included for analysis because it contributed the third largest number of news texts covering the protest events.

As the case study process involved drawing on coverage of two events it demanded two periods of source gathering. The ProQuest database was chosen because it is a comprehensive and authoritative database for news analysis. Firstly, 81 news texts about the Melbourne City Square protest were gathered by entering the search term 'Occupy Melbourne' into the ProQuest database and limiting the source type to newspapers, specifically to *The Age*, *The Herald Sun* and *The Australian* and their weekend editions. This search term was chosen on the basis that Occupy Melbourne was the instigator and comprised the majority of participants in the City Square protest. The two weeks that surrounded the event was chosen because this is the period which received the most news coverage. As the City Square protest started on 15 October 2011, and ended six days later on 21 October when the police evicted the protesters, the news texts collected were confined to a period from the beginning of the week in which the event started, to the end of that fortnight, i.e. from 12 to 26 October 2011. Of the 81 results, only 22 turned out to be relevant news texts. The remainder consisted of 19 editorial/opinion pieces, 19 letters to the editor and the remaining 21 were news texts which barely mentioned the protests while focusing on mostly unrelated issues and one was not in a standard news format. The editorial/opinion pieces were ignored as the research is only

concerned with representations offered by what is supposed to be objective news coverage. For similar reasons, letters to the editor were not used as a basis for study.

The gathering of news focusing on the Brisbane G20 protests followed a slightly different procedure. Because the G20 took place on 15-16 November 2014, it was most beneficial to limit the analysis to coverage published from the two weeks surrounding the event from 7 to 21 November 2014. Some of the relevant news texts were found by typing 'Brisbane G20 protests' into the ProQuest database and limiting the source type to newspapers, specifically to *The Courier Mail*, *The Australian* and these newspapers' weekend editions. Of the 77 news texts found, only 19 were relevant for the purposes of the thesis. Of the remainder, 32 covered the protests with little detail or merely focused on an issue tenuously related to the G20 protests, 11 were editorials/opinion pieces, eight were not written in a standard news format, four were letters to the editor, and three were duplicates of news texts included in the 19 already determined to be relevant to the analysis.

Because the *Brisbane Times* was absent from the ProQuest search results, the relevant news texts published by this newspaper could only be found by typing 'Brisbane G20 protests' into the newspaper's website search engine. The relevant news texts published within this time period were extracted from the 100 links that came up. Because the website does not allow filtering by date, all 100 results had to be checked, leading to the exclusion of 53 items published outside the chosen timeframe. Of the 47 news texts remaining, 21 were included in the study. The excluded 26 comprised 19 that were deemed irrelevant because they focused on issues completely unrelated or only tangentially related to the Brisbane G20 protests. Of the seven remaining, there were six that were not standard news texts and one editorial/opinion text. In total, 41 news texts from ProQuest and the *Brisbane Times* website

focusing on the Brisbane G20 protests were deemed adequate for analysis. All up, for both case studies, there were 63 news texts found relevant for analysis.

A framing analysis of the 63 news texts gathered from ProQuest and the *Brisbane Times* website was the optimal way to answer the research questions. In order to describe framing, the best starting point is Entman's assertion that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. (1993: 52)

In other words, framing emphasises a particular perspective. It relies on the selection of images, words and sources to tell an audience a particular story. In doing so, framing defines issues. The framing analysis in this thesis is an investigation of the way "news organisations choose how to package their stories in understandable ways" for interpretation (Druckman 2010: XIII). It is important to study news frames because they have the power to influence beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2008).

This method of analysis was chosen as it enabled the identification of patterns and trends in the reporting of the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests. The purpose of this was to assist in determining the dominant frames of the coverage by analysing the framing devices of language and source selection. The language use of the news texts was the primary focus, but ignored elements such as images or page layout for two primary reasons. Firstly, the ProQuest search results did not provide images (although the *Brisbane Times* did) and secondly because assessment of the news texts' language allowed for findings of the dominant words and terms which characterised the protests and protesters. As discussed,

below, common news frames usually fall into six main categories. The goal was to determine which frame, if any, the news texts employed. This could often be achieved simply by reading the opening sentence of the piece. This first sentence often reveals the news angle. After the individual news texts were analysed to determine their primary frame, the findings were highlighted in the analysis and discussion. This was to indicate the frequency of the most commonly used primary frames in the coverage.

Identifying instances of source selection was the next task. In doing so, there was an emphasis on primary definers. To find the primary definer, sources who were quoted – either early, to set the tone of a news text, or extensively – in a way which influenced the frame of a particular news text were identified. There was also a focus on the selection of elite vs non-elite sources as primary definers. Elites, for the purposes of the thesis, were characterised as those speaking on behalf of the government, legal, police establishments, or as representatives of the business fraternity. Non-elite sources were protesters or local business operators who were not a part of these establishments. In investigating the number of elite to non-elite sources in the case studies, the findings on the proportion of elite and non-elite sources were written up as percentages in the analysis and discussion chapter. Findings showing what percentage of primary definers were elites and non-elites were also written up. The purpose of this analysis was to contribute to understanding the impact of elites and non-elites on the framing of the protests.

The news frame is useful for both journalists and audiences. While it assists the reporter in assembling information in a news story in line with rules and structures of news discourse, it also conveys meaning to the audience (McLeod 2000; Gitlin 1980; Pan and Kosicki 1993). Pan and Kosicki compared the news frame to a “cognitive window” (1993: 59). News

framing makes particular information more salient, so in order to best understand framing in operation, researchers must be cognisant of the exclusionary role it plays: “most frames are defined by what they omit as well as include” (Entman 1993: 54). What gets left out of news stories has a considerable impact on how they may be interpreted (Maher 2003). Maher argued that framing theorists are just as interested in the universe of reality (which he calls an “environment” (2003: 87) that exists outside a frame as they are in the information within the frame itself. In other words, they are concerned with the context surrounding the content (Maher 2003).

This focus on what is omitted from news frames is reflected in the analysis of the case studies central in this thesis. This is because there was an investigation of the way that the protest groups represented themselves in the coverage as well as on their websites. For the City Square protest case study, there was an analysis looking at the context in the form of Occupy Melbourne members’ statements in the coverage, as well as the self-representation on their website. Their website was chosen for analysis because, unlike the news coverage, the group has control over framing, allowing them to shape their characterisations free from any commercial news intermediaries. The self-representation on their website was compared to the characterisations foregrounded in the news coverage. This comparison revealed what had been left out or represented differently in the coverage. This is important because the marked difference between the self-representation of the protesters from their characterisation by the commercial news media and primary definers suggested possible press misrepresentation. Due to the presence of many different groups critical of capitalism at the Brisbane G20 protests, there was not enough textual space to engage with their respective websites to compare and contrast their website representations with the newspapers’ characterisations. However, it was possible to engage with attempts by certain protest groups to assert

themselves within the coverage. In order to understand the newspapers' framing of these groups, their attempts to assert themselves were analysed while taking into account the context of the ways in which the protest groups attempted to characterise themselves.

Analysis of the case studies mostly sought to identify the dominant frames of the news texts which contributed to the representations of the protests and protesters. According to the framing literature, there are six predominant types of frame observable in the news. They are most simply referred to as: conflict; human interest; attribution of responsibility; morality; economic consequences, and; political framing. The conflict frame involves focusing on the opposition between two or more individuals or groups (Van Gorp 2010). Human interest usually focuses on a particular person or people as they make their way through the world (Blood et al. 2002). Attribution of responsibility, which is about blame, can highlight individual or societal responsibility and is comparable to morality as they both judge and question the actions of a person or group or the contributions of a particular system (Entman 2010; Scheufele and Tewksbury 2008). An economic consequences frame usually sees a news text highlight the implications of an issue for the economy (Entman 2010). The final commonly identified frame is political framing, which is the most amorphous and consequently the most difficult to locate in news texts. This frame can occur in any story that focuses on politics (Entman 2010). These six frames commonly shape news stories because they:

Form universally understood codes that implicitly influence the receiver's message interpretations, which lends meaning, coherence, and ready explanations for complex issues. (Van Gorp 2010: 88)

One of the main foci of this thesis was concerned with drawing out the dominant frames within the case study news texts, but it should be noted that multiple frames can exist within the same story and some may lack one of these common frames altogether. To take this into account, there was a minor focus on the presence of secondary frames in the City Square protest news coverage because these secondary frames only played a minor role in characterising the protests and protesters.

The literature on news framing shows its importance as a means of social construction, revealing the news as a site where problems are defined. Lawrence writes of the social constructionist approach that “[it] assumes that ‘problems’ may not exist objectively as much as they exist in perception” (2000: 4). News organisations can create, emphasise, and confine the exposure of problems to the polity (Lawrence 2000). Markedly different frames can be used to characterise the same issue or event. A good example of this is the contrasting frames used to portray poverty. The poor are either vilified due to their alleged indolence, or made the objects of pity as victims of a harsh socioeconomic system (Van Gorp 2010). This shows how framing can define discourses focusing on marginalised groups in society, a central focus of the analyses in the case studies central in this thesis.

Another aspect of news framing is power attribution. This is seen in the power that framing has to shape or distort public perceptions through the promotion or marginalisation of competing perspectives on issues that affect the public (Lawrence 2000). Because of this power, framing can work to either promote or inhibit the political goals of various groups in society (Lawrence 2000). This is a significant element of news framing for the purposes of analysing the Occupy Melbourne and Brisbane G20 protesters, because they wished to insert their causes into news coverage. These findings indicate, significantly for this thesis, that

commercial news media can confer legitimacy, and consequently authority, on certain individuals or groups, the institutions they represent, and the particular system they operate within while unconsciously marginalising other groups.

Furthermore, framing quite often works to prioritise certain views associated with official organisations while either subjugating others or rendering them invisible. Gamson and Modigliani (1989) argued that sources from organisational backgrounds exploit news media's craving for the appropriate catchphrase, giving them power to suggest the frame.

Exacerbating this tendency is the fact that organised groups find it easier to state their case through commercial news media because they have access to specialists who are adept at influencing news discourse (Gamson and Modigliani 1989). Similar to Hall et al's (1978/2013) primary and secondary definer theory, Gamson and Modigliani argued that elite groups have more sway over news frames than non-elites: "supposedly illegitimate challengers are rarely offered the opportunity to criticise government statements" (1989: 8). Lawrence used the term "indexing process" to describe the way that preeminent voices are gifted with the greatest influence. The central idea put forth by this theory is that journalists "index" or adjust news stories to fit the power balance they perceive amongst those in government (Lawrence 2010: 269). Lawrence argued:

The news thus tends to reflect the perspectives promulgated by those whom journalists perceive to have the most power to influence the situation, and who have the greatest institutional capacity and communications apparatus to put across their point of view. (2010: 269)

As shown in the literature review, elites also tend to be the most accessible sources, which is significant for journalists working towards deadlines. Scheufele and Tewksbury (2008) took a

more moderate stance than the arguments made above. While they acknowledged that there exist numerous studies which show that elites are centrally positioned in news discourse, they pointed out that candidates in US presidential elections (presumably of the dualistic Democratic and Republican parties) are quite often only moderately successful in getting their intended frames out into the public consciousness (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2008). Though they did not completely disagree with viewing commercial news media as favourable for the perspectives of government elites, they suggested this is far from universal (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2008).

The framing literature reveals two primary schools of thought concerning news framing: social constructionism and power attribution. Both of these interpretations reveal the importance of commercial news media as they highlight its impact on public discourse. The argument of the social constructionist school is that news defines problems. Some theorists who approach framing from this perspective have asserted that news can define issues as problematic in ways that may not be strictly reflective of a version of reality (Lawrence 2000). The power attribution school is concerned, above all, with news media's ability to confer legitimacy on particular individuals and groups. This perspective highlights news media's ability to ascribe power to elites. Although news can give the same treatment to non-elites, the literature establishes that news texts mainly give influence to elite voices.

Despite the usefulness of this mode of analysis, it does have limitations. When engaged in a framing analysis the researcher must identify the frame. This procedure is more than likely going to be subjective because "some level of subjectivity [is] unavoidable" (Van Gorp 2010: 90). If the research for this thesis does not take into account all aspects of a story, the framing analysis of the protest coverage central in the thesis risks prejudice. To prevent analysis of the

case studies from being overly subjective the analysis was undertaken with as impartial a mindset as possible. Practically, this meant paying attention to language and source use that positioned the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests both favourably and unfavourably. Despite these caveats, the framing analysis approach provides a rich data set for analysis. It is of immense benefit to this thesis, because can be used to identify common patterns, labels or categories to describe groups or events in the news texts (Blood et al. 2002).

This chapter has provided an outline of the approach and methods undertaken in order to analyse the newspaper reportage of the Melbourne City Square and Brisbane G20 protests. It has described the way news texts relevant for analysis were found using ProQuest and the *Brisbane Times* website. It has also clarified the foci of the analysis: determining the dominant frames of the coverage through an analysis of language and source selection within the news texts. The research also entails comparing the self-representation of protesters on Occupy Melbourne's website with those of the selected news media texts. The chapter has also justified the use of this approach and method. Because the main part of the analysis involves identifying the key frames used to characterise these protests there were several definitions offered as to what constitutes a news frame. In identifying these, the chapter not only defined a news frame, but also highlighted two primary results of framing as outlined in the literature: social constructionism and power attribution. This is important as it shows how news media can define and create problems as well as perpetuate a power structure that can contribute to hindering alternative groups from inserting their causes into the news coverage in a way that is favourable for them. The next chapter reveals the findings of this approach.

Analysis and Discussion

“Please read the newspapers very carefully.” – Georg Weerth (Hobsbawm 1997: 21)

This chapter begins by exploring the news coverage of the 2011 Melbourne City Square protest. This is followed by an analysis and discussion of the reportage on the 2014 Brisbane G20 summit protests. The purpose of this is to show how these 21st Century protests critical of capitalism have been represented by an Australian commercial news media within a capitalist system. As part of this analysis, the main frames of the coverage are identified by close consideration of the framing devices of language use and source selection within the news texts. This will reveal the most salient aspects (the frames) that depict the protests in a certain way. There is a particular focus on the primary definers of the coverage and how they frame the protests and those who participate in them. The chapter closes by discussing and synthesising the findings of both case studies, offering a conclusion as to how the events have been characterised. Beyond this, the chapter shows how the case study findings comply with or contest previous literature on protests, primary definers and commercial news media's role within a liberal capitalist democracy.

News coverage published by *The Herald Sun*, *The Age* and *The Australian* focusing on the City Square protest foregrounded several frames which served to characterise the event. The conflict between protesters and authorities was the most salient frame, emphasising both verbal hostility and violent conflict between the two groups. The prominence of violent conflict in the news reportage contributed to an emphasis on the alleged danger inherent in the protest. Some of this emphasis on conflict was achieved by concentrating on the violence and disorder resulting from police attempting to disperse seemingly uncooperative protesters. The focus on conflict also depicted the protest as having adverse effects on other members of

the public. This was demonstrated by two primary emphases. There were hostile assertions by elite sources that the actions of protesters in setting up a protest camp had prevented others from entering the CBD, and there was also a portrayal of the protest as unpropitious for local business owners due to its allegedly negative impact on profits. This latter criticism was made by the business operators themselves and by representatives of the business fraternity. Other members of the public were also represented as being negatively affected, because the protest was framed as being threatening towards innocent bystanders (mostly children). Accordingly, these foci of the newspapers largely ignored the issues that inform Occupy Melbourne's cause.

Conversely, the main focus of the Brisbane G20 news coverage was the security of the summit. News texts published before the summit focused on the measures police intended to put in place to ensure the protests remained orderly. Like the City Square protest coverage, the conflict frame was prominent; a fact demonstrated by protesters' critical responses to the security measures which they perceived as harsh or illiberal. The protesters' objections were framed as potentially contributing to rebellious behaviour, as it seemed likely they would refuse to adhere to laws they so vehemently opposed. As there were only a couple of examples featuring protesters transgressing the summit rules, reportage during the event framed the police as having successfully kept order. While individual protesters and radical groups were emphasised, if it seemed they were liable to break the rules (usually the implication was that they would be unruly), the fact that most of them ultimately conformed was ignored in favour of underlining the effectiveness of the police in maintaining order. The radical protest groups featured in the newspapers were all foregrounded from this perspective, while their causes were neglected. Conversely, mainstream protest groups and

the Queensland Greens received more positive attention from the newspapers, which allowed them to state their causes.

The Melbourne City Square Protest Newspaper Coverage

Newspaper coverage of the City Square protest primarily drew on two frames: conflict and economic consequences. The attribution of responsibility frame also featured as a dominant frame, though less frequently. Regarding the conflict frame, the coverage saw an emphasis on two forms of conflict: verbal hostility and violence, both of which occurred between the protesters and police, and the former between the protesters and the Lord Mayor, Robert Doyle. Verbal hostility is a non-violent form of spoken conflict and sees confrontation between two or more individuals or groups. By contrast, violence, for the purposes of this thesis, means violent acts directed towards people or property (Cammaerts 2013).

Economic consequences were highlighted by giving attention to operators and representatives of the business fraternity who were shown to be hostile to the presence of Occupy Melbourne members in the City Square. The attribution of responsibility frame was mostly evident in the antagonism Cr Doyle exhibited towards Occupy Melbourne as he was shown blaming the protest for hindering members of the public from entering the CBD. Because these topics predominated, the coverage largely ignored the cause of Occupy Melbourne and limited the protesters' ability to insert their cause or counter-definitions into the coverage.

Conflict played the leading role in defining the City Square protest coverage. While many previous studies focusing on protest reportage have found that conflict that is violent tends to be foregrounded (Cammaerts 2013; Donson et al. 2004), the news coverage highlighted a contrast between verbal hostility and violence between protesters and elite sources. Mediated

conflict is characterised by stressing hostility and disagreement between two or more individuals or groups (An and Gower 2009). This was the predominant frame in 11 of the 22 news texts. The conflict reported in the news texts stemmed from the actions of the Government and police in evicting Occupy Melbourne from the protest camp they had set up in City Square. Conflict was also a secondary frame in many news texts apart from these 11. In these other stories, opposition between the protesters and Cr Doyle or protesters and police was not the central focus. For example, in 'Move Them Out by the Weekend', although economic consequences was the predominant frame, both Cr Doyle and Victoria Police Inspector Bernie Jackson called for the protesters to leave the City Square (see Wright 2011). In this case, Inspector Jackson asserted that protesters would be removed by force if they stayed after the council had ordered their eviction (see Wright 2011). Conflict-framed news texts published before the eviction emphasised the view of elite sources, such as Cr Doyle, police spokespeople, and representatives of the business fraternity, who called for Occupy Melbourne to be moved on from the site (see Webb 2011; Wright 2011). Because Occupy Melbourne protesters were being defined by their opposition to political and police authority, they were characterised as both belligerent and uncooperative.

Analysis of the stories concerned with the eviction revealed an emphasis on the protesters' chagrin and hostility to their forced dispersal from their protest camp by police. The news texts showed Occupy Melbourne protesters to be indignant about the force they alleged that police had employed in dispersing them. Claims such as James Gibson's that "police have been completely out of line... I have been really pretty brutalised by them today, as has everyone... I just cannot understand how they could act that way towards peaceful protesters" (qtd. in Mickelborough and Harris 2011), and Carl Scrase's report that "it's obvious there was extreme police brutality, everyone saw it" (qtd. in Millar et al 2011), were

typical of the views put forward by protesters. This description of allegedly violent police actions positioned them as harsh because they were used on protesters who self-identified as peaceful. Because protesters were generally quoted only when they asserted an antagonistic stance towards authorities, the protest was characterised by its hostility. However, this characterisation was not limited to the protesters, as the most significant primary definer of the reportage, Cr Doyle, was consistently shown to be hostile towards the protesters.

Within media, elite sources tend to be vested with significant influence to shape the news angle. As discussed in the literature review, this was highlighted in Hall et al's (1978/2013) work on crime reporting, which found that representatives of the police establishment, home office and the courts are the primary definers of news focusing on crime in the UK. Although non-elite sources can be framed as primary definers, generally commercial news media treats elite sources as more credible and reliable (Hall et al. 1978/2013). Elite sources also tend to outnumber non-elites in news media, which reflects the heavy reliance reporters have on official sources (Bowers 2011; Noakes and Gillham 2006). Both of these findings, on supposed credibility and prevalence, were confirmed by analysis of the City Square protest coverage.

Of the 90 instances of sources being featured, 59 (about 65.5 percent) were elites. The remaining 31 (about 34.5 percent) were non-elites. Furthermore, 27 of 33 primary definers were elites, while six were non-elites (four of whom were protesters). This means that elite sources had considerably more scope to influence the news angle than non-elites. This imbalance contributed to negative characterisations of the protesters, as over 69 percent of elite sources were hostile towards the protest. In the coverage Cr Doyle was the individual who most frequently characterised the protest and the protesters (though Assistant Police

Commissioner Stephen Fontana was also a dominant elite primary definer). The status of Cr Doyle as a primary definer was supported by the textual space given over to his perspective, which was typically unfavourable for the protest because he did not hesitate in utilising negative characterisations to describe the protesters. This exemplifies commercial news media's tendency to emphasise discord when focusing on protests, which is consistent with the pre-existing literature (Ward 1995). The result of a focus on Cr Doyle's generally derogatory views was the immediate negative framing of Occupy Melbourne. Scathing epithets such as "self-righteous, narcissistic, self-indulgent rabble" (qtd. in Perkins 2011 and Rintoul 2011), an insistence that they were "very selfish, duplicitous people [for setting up the camp]" (qtd. in Munro et al. 2011) and observations like "looking at the anger and violence on the faces of the protesters [it was clear] a number of them simply wanted to fight police" (qtd. in Preiss et al. 2011), all served to depict the protesters as ego-centric, deceptive, threatening and truculent. These characterisations were strengthened in the coverage by the intensity of the Mayor's statements and by the disproportionately large amount of space they were given, especially in contrast to the lack of space for counter-definitions by the protesters.

Another unfavourable remark levelled at Occupy Melbourne by elite primary definers such as Cr Doyle and Assistant Commissioner Fontana was that their behaviour in setting up a protest camp had made City Square inaccessible to other members of the public. This example of the attribution of responsibility frame was generally used before the group had been evicted and as a result was used to justify calling for their removal. The attribution of responsibility frame operates within news media by focusing on the actions of certain individuals or groups in contributing to a certain (usually negative) outcome (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2008). Calls for Occupy Melbourne's removal were stressed in the newspaper coverage with statements

by Cr Doyle such as: “A week was a reasonable time for their mindless shriek of protest... They bleat about their rights. What about the rights of the 800,000 people who use the city every day?” (qtd. in Munro et al. 2011). Similar, although more civil sentiments were expressed by Assistant Police Commissioner Stephen Fontana: “They've had more than ample time to make their point in terms of what their protest is about, and I think it's time to give City Square back to the citizens of Melbourne” (qtd. in Rintoul 2011). It is clear that these statements expressed by the two elite primary definers characterised the protesters as selfish for allegedly denying ingress to the citizenry. In highlighting this, the coverage distinguished those who had a ‘right to the city’ from the protesters, who were deemed not to have that right. This distinction characterised the protesters as ‘outsiders’ because it suggested that the protesters had overstayed their welcome and were obstructing the worthier public (the majority) from entering their City Square. This exemplifies Feigenbaum et al’s argument that protest camps are spaces represented by “mainstream media...as obstructive and illegal” (2013: 1). It can also be seen to reflect commercial news media’s role in vilifying groups that dissent from the existing economic system (Buttigieg 2005). In this case, this was accomplished by amplifying the voices of primary definers who denounced the protesters.

Although the majority of elite voices in the coverage were hostile towards the protesters, it should be noted that there were some who defended Occupy Melbourne or were critical of the police response. Most prominent of these were Greens politicians, and lawyers. An example of the former was foregrounded in ‘Notice for Protesters’ Melbourne’s representative in Federal Parliament and then deputy leader of the Australian Greens, Adam Bandt, defended the protesters (see Wright 2011). He asserted that he thought the protest was “great” and that peaceful protesters should be allowed to remain in City Square (qtd. in Wright 2011). An example of lawyers openly disapproving of police actions was most

evident in ‘Doyle Unrepentant as Protesters Consider Action’, as lawyers Matt Wilson, Greg Barns and Hugh De Kretser all criticised police conduct in removing Occupy Melbourne protesters from City Square (see Munro et al. 2011). The lawyers claimed that police overreacted by using capsicum spray on protesters and that such actions should not be tolerated by society (see Munro et al. 2011). This further demonstrates the pervasiveness of conflict in the reportage; in this case, however, it was played out between elite sources rather than between protesters and authorities.

The news coverage presented conflict in such a way that it made the protest appear to be dangerous. Although non-violent verbal hostility was a prominent focus, there was an emphasis on the chaotic and violent nature of Occupy Melbourne’s eviction, on how the unruly scenes either resulted in injuries to protesters and police, or threatened bystanders. This is a characterisation common of protests critical of capitalism in news media. News media tends to highlight protesters’ disorderly potential, as well as the possibility that they will be violent or engage in criminal behaviour (Donson et al. 2004; Ward 1995). The framing of the City Square protest was underpinned by stressing not only the culpability of Occupy Melbourne in creating a dangerous situation but also, to a lesser degree, the police for their alleged forceful handling of the protester’s dispersal from City Square.

While focusing on the violence that ensued from the eviction, the protesters were quite often framed as accountable for this situation: “Occupy Melbourne spokesman Nick Carson, when asked why the protest had not ended peacefully as he pledged earlier in the week, said a lot had happened since that promise” (see Rintoul 2011). In this news text, it appeared that Carson accepted the coverage’s frame, which blamed the group for inducing the disorder of the event as he did not deny that some protesters had engaged in violent behaviour. Similarly,

the protesters were imputed for the danger of the scene, as exemplified by a news text published by *The Age* which framed the “campers” defiance of an order from Melbourne City Council to leave the square by 9 AM as the catalyst of the police response:

Police, including officers from the mounted branch, dog squad and public order response team, moved in to disperse the crowd at around midday...

Officers dragged people along the ground and carried others by their arms and legs, loading them into the back of police vans en masse. (cited in Preiss et al. 2011)

This emphasis on the protesters’ culpability can be seen as consistent with the work of Donson et al. (2004), who found that an emphasis in commercial newspapers on deviance or even criminality tends to frame protesters critical of capitalism as what Cohen termed “folk devils” (1972/2011: 2).

In the City Square protest coverage, there was particular attention paid to the forceful approach officers took towards protesters who refused to comply with the order to disperse. The example immediately above foregrounded not only the three police departments involved in the eviction (the fact that so many police personnel and resources were put into the operation suggested that the situation was serious) but also that officers treated protesters roughly (dragging them, carrying them by their arms and legs, arresting them “en masse” (cited in Preiss et al. 2011). The reporting characterised protesters as a homogenous mass because it mostly ignored individuals who did not resist officers by suggesting that all of the protesters had committed actions which justified their arrest. The other characterisation implied in the extract is the disempowerment of the protesters in relation to police. Despite this, the framing of officers taking control of the situation does not necessarily represent police positively. This is because police had to rely on coercive rather than peaceful measures

to remove the protesters. This framing confirms the findings of previous research which finds that negative depictions of police sometimes feature in news media (Weitzer 2002). However, the City Square protest reportage differs from findings that there is a symbiosis between police and commercial news media which generally leads to the privileging of police as primary definers within law and order news (Dowler 2002; Lee and McGovern 2010). Although the coverage did ascribe officers with relative control over protesters it served to represent police negatively: “[police] herded [protesters] through the streets” ultimately seeing that “tents were torn down and the last of the protesters were dragged away, some bleeding” (cited in Rintoul 2011). Police were presented here as dominating protesters by force in this instance by treating them like livestock (“herded”), by destroying their camp, and dragging them from the City Square.

This foregrounding of police taking control by force clearly contributed to the framing of the protest as dangerous. It was stressed that 20 protesters were treated by ambulance crews for minor injuries, two officers suffered minor injuries, and that eight police cars were damaged (see Preiss et al. 2011). The violent behaviour was inflicted on protesters and officers alike, as well as on police property (although it appears that the protesters, and their camp, bore the brunt of the injuries and damage). This presented the protest as especially dangerous due to both groups being threatened and suffering harm.

Much of the coverage was concerned with the efforts of elite sources to defend themselves against the charge that police had mistreated protesters when removing them from City Square. This, too, adhered to the conflict frame which characterised the protest as dangerous because these accusations served to highlight the turbulence of the eviction. Counter-claims by elites can be found in these excerpts: “Assistant Commissioner Steve Fontana said police

used the least amount of force necessary to remove the protesters after they were asked to go peacefully” (cited in Rintoul 2011), and: “Lord mayor Robert Doyle remained unrepentant, rejecting criticisms of his decision to evict Occupy Melbourne protesters who had been camped in the City Square for a week” (cited in Munro et al. 2011). This conflict frame stressed the threatening aspect of the camp, as seen, for example, in a news story published by the *Sunday Age* that focused on some protesters’ plans to commence legal action against the police and City of Melbourne for their treatment. This included accusations that officers in riot gear had kicked and punched the protesters while forcibly removing them from City Square (see Munro et al. 2011). Such reporting not only highlighted the extent of antagonism between Occupy Melbourne and elite sources but also depicted the protest as a dangerous environment for all involved.

The literature on chaotic and violent protests is often vague as to who commercial news media tends to frame as endangered (Smith et al. 2001; Cammaerts 2013). However, in relation to violent crime, Chibnall (1977/2001) argued that coverage tends to emphasise physical injury inflicted on bystanders. Both of these findings, that news media is vague as to who is endangered and that bystanders are framed as endangered, were reflected in the case of the City Square protest reportage, as it was found that as well as the obvious casualties of violence and criminality such as protesters and police, bystanders were also framed as threatened. Characterisations of the protest as threatening towards teenagers and children were primary as far as threats to bystanders were concerned. *The Sunday Herald Sun* reported that complaints were made to police that teenagers had been given drugs and alcohol by protesters in the Occupy Melbourne camp: “Charity workers said they had approached police after several sources reported children as young as 13 were given substances including cannabis and alcohol” (cited in White et al. 2011).

The most prominent example of the news characterising children as innocent victims of the protest was found in a news text entitled ‘Woman with Child Slammed’ (Campbell 2011). The news story was concerned with a photograph showing a woman with a child in the midst of the unruly Occupy Melbourne eviction. The primary definers identifiable within the news text were two experts on mental health: Dr Michael Carr-Gregg and child psychologist Tracy Bentin. The opening sentence reflects the primacy of these experts: “Child psychologists have said a woman photographed with a distressed child at the eviction of Occupy Melbourne protests on Friday could have exposed the child to long-term damage” (cited in Campbell 2011). This served to immediately frame the story and the woman (it is not made known whether she is the mother) from a clinical psychology perspective. The expert views put forward by Dr Carr-Gregg and Bentin remain unchallenged in the text. As primary definers, the experts were able to characterise the woman as a bad guardian for bringing the child to what the report depicted as turbulent scenes with the following statements: Bentin reported that “most people would find it disturbing a child was put in this situation”, while Dr Carr-Gregg stated: “To place a child in a volatile situation where there are angry people and dogs and pepper spray [is] the height of stupidity” (qtd. in Campbell 2011). This frame depicted the woman as negligent in her guardianship by linking the protest to danger. As a result, it also reflected the morality frame. This is because the woman, as the characterised guardian of the child, was framed as behaving immorally by bringing the child to a dangerous environment. This is also consistent with literature that shows offences (particularly those framed as immoral) are said to be more newsworthy if children are involved (Jewkes 2015).

The conflict frame not only positioned the protest and the subsequent eviction as dangerous, it also extended to a depiction of the protesters themselves as threatening. This was evident

because protesters were characterised as menacing towards elites. One title representative of this frame was ‘Mob Turns on Cops’ (Butler and Drill 2011). The labelling of the protesters as “a mob” homogenised them, suggesting that the protesters, as a fractious and aggressive group, had banded together to attack police. However, the title turned out to be misleading as the body of the news text showed that the conflict had in fact stemmed merely from protesters distributing a flyer which accused one police officer of being “violent and dangerous” (qtd. in Butler and Drill 2011). This reveals the power of headlines as a framing device in anchoring the news text and, as a result, defining its primary frame. As Blood and Holland argued: “The headline is usually pivotal because it directs readers to what is at stake and helps them attend to what is in the frame and not to what is excluded” (2004: 324). Occupy Melbourne members were also characterised as violent and dangerous when they were depicted as threatening towards Cr Doyle. In a news text published by *The Herald Sun*, protesters were said to have turned to “internet vandalism” (cited in Craven 2011) in retaliation for their eviction, a reference to the defacement of Cr Doyle’s Wikipedia page. The story suggested the protesters were aggressive and violent (even potentially murderous) in their hostility towards Cr Doyle. For example, it is shown that the actions of protesters included posting virulent remarks such as: “Happy death to Robert Doyle is what I would be saying if I met him in person” (qtd. in Craven 2011).

In the City Square protest news coverage there was a frequent focus on the negative effect the protest had had on Melbourne businesses. By undermining the aims of the protesters to raise awareness of the harmful aspects of capitalism, the use of the economic consequences frame depicted the City Square protest as costing mostly local businesses money and resources. This was the dominant frame within three news texts. In foregrounding local business, these stories put a human face to the alleged economic harm done to operators by the protesters,

thereby also employing a human interest frame. This was exemplified by one of the few selections of a non-elite source as a primary definer in the coverage. Brunetti store manager Phil Castagna, in a text published by *The Age* (see Webb 2011), was shown to be displeased with the protest as he believed supplies had gone missing and business had gone down. Ultimately, Castagna implied that Occupy Melbourne had made its point, and asserted that he would like to see the group leave (see Webb 2011). This humanising of them economic consequences frame was further demonstrated by a focus on the impact the protest had on Gerard and Michael Anderson:

Normally on a warm afternoon, their cafe Caboose Canteen, their bar Three Below and their wine store La Vita Buona would be crowded. But yesterday most seats were empty and the men blame the camp with its sea of tents, pitched on the square since Saturday. Gerard Anderson said the camp has prevented passing pedestrians from noticing his venues and the noise was a turn-off. (cited in Webb 2011)

This focus framed Melbourne small business operators as being irritated by the presence of the protesters for allegedly turning customers away from their shops. This frustration was directly related to the threat allegedly posed by the protest to their business profits. The emphasis portrayed local business people as victims of the protests struggling to make a living under increased economic strain. As a result, and similar to the call by elite primary definers such as Cr Doyle and Assistant Commissioner Fontana, there was a pattern of business operators using the protest's allegedly negative impact on their livelihoods to justify calling for Occupy Melbourne's eviction. An example of this was provided by the sentence: "The owners of three City Square businesses say Melbourne City Council must evict the Occupy Melbourne campers, with turnover down 70 per cent" (cited in Webb 2011).

Accusations that the protest camp was having adverse effects on Melbourne shops were not made only by those who operate these businesses. The news texts gave significant attention to elite primary definers who represent the business fraternity. The Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry were given the role of representing local businesses from an elite perspective. Although they did not feature as frequently nor were given as much attention as the individuals who run the affected businesses, their inclusion in the news coverage contributed to the frame justifying the removal of Occupy Melbourne protesters by pointing to the negative effect they had been accused of having on businesses (see Mickelborough and Butler 2011; Wright 2011). In doing so, these elites put forward the rationale that the protest's economic cost on businesses had been so damaging that the protesters should end it. This argument was put forward in 'Move Them out by the Weekend', by Mark Stone, chief executive of the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who was paraphrased to the effect that "businesses had suffered as a result of the occupation and he expected the protesters to be removed by Sunday" (cited in Wright 2011).

The accusation that the protest had had a harmful effect on the local economy was so central in these news texts that protesters felt it necessary to defend themselves against this charge. For example, David Schoeffel, a spokesman for Occupy Melbourne, stated that the group did not want to harm the Melbourne economy, contending that "[it was] the last thing we would like to hurt" (qtd. in Webb 2011). In this example at least, the predominant economic consequences frame positioned Occupy Melbourne as defensive which drew attention away from the criticisms the group directs at the negative consequences of capitalism. This was achieved by business operators and representatives of the business fraternity turning

criticisms onto the protesters for making life more difficult for local business people. Ultimately, this demonstrates cultural hegemony in operation. This is because it was presented as ‘common sense’ that local business operators were struggling to make a living, a concomitant of the capitalist system. As a result, this highlights the ability of commercial news media to put forward values favourable for the existing social system (Hands 2015; Lull 2010). Specifically, the economic consequences framed reporting worked to characterise the business operators as fulfilling a crucial role within capitalism, which is a tendency of commercial media, indicating its ideological state apparatus role (Wright and Roberts 2013). This frame led to the Occupy Melbourne protesters who challenged this system being denigrated; supporting Buttigieg’s (2005) argument that cultural hegemony functions so that those who challenge ‘common sense’ understandings of commercial news media are commonly vilified.

The analysis of the news coverage showed that as well as being depicted negatively in this way; protesters’ reasons for occupying the square were seldom published. As evidenced above, the news texts tended to focus on the conflict, danger or economic consequences of the protest. This meant that protesters were mostly forced to assert themselves in response to these frames which were typically defined by elite primary definers such as Cr Doyle and Assistant Commissioner Fontana. This can be seen as an example of what Hall et al. termed “counter-definitions of the situation” (1978/2013: 67). The term “counter-definers” calls attention to those who have “no access to the defining process [in news media coverage] at all” and “must respond in terms pre-established by the primary definers and the privileged definitions” (Hall et al. 1978/2013: 67). This is reflected in the coverage by the focus usually being on undermining Occupy Melbourne’s capacity to raise awareness of their cause. As the analysis of the coverage showed, the newspapers were more concerned with the violence and

conflict of the eviction, so protesters were given more attention when they participated in that conflict by accusing the police of treating them roughly or criticising the eviction order (see Butler and Drill 2011; Preiss et al. 2011). This was demonstrated by the research findings of the coverage which showed that of the 25 protester sources, only six (24 percent) stated their cause. The remaining 19 (76 percent) mostly responded to the eviction notification or asserted their opposition to the way police had allegedly handled them. Commercial news media giving prominence to frames which obscure protests' causes is a trend observed in the literature (Boykoff 2006).

The few cases in which Occupy Melbourne protesters were able to express their reasons for protesting saw them highlight the issues that inform their cause and describe their movement. It was clear from their statements that the unjust wealth disparity fostered by capitalism informs the group's cause. David Schoeffel, for example, was of the opinion that "it [is] not fair that 1 per cent of the world's population has 40 percent or more of the world's wealth and also has most of the political influence" (qtd in Webb 2011). Similarly, the central concern put forward by protester Indigo Davis-Sparke was economic inequality: "It's an awareness campaign as much as anything... so many people don't know about the unequal distribution of wealth across the world, and the damage it does" (qtd in Madden 2011). The inclusion of these quotes shows that the coverage did, at least occasionally, engage with the protesters' reasons for protesting. This points to commercial news media performing a public sphere role, because it did report the views of protesters. The public sphere, in theory, allows the citizenry to express their opinions in a democratic way, thereby giving them mediated attention (Habermas 1964). However, some authors have argued that this function of commercial news media has diminished due to the ascendancy in the last century of globalised corporations that are increasingly able to exclude public scrutiny from political

compromises made with the state (DeLuca and Pepples 2002; Habermas 1964). Interestingly, one of Occupy Melbourne's concerns is with corporate influence over the government – this was accorded minimal attention by the reporting.

The newspapers' engagement with the group's cause was limited when compared to the description offered on Occupy Melbourne's website:

We started out protest on the 15th of October 2011 by setting up camp in City Square. Its primary areas of concern consist of the wide, unfair disparity between the rich and the poor, social discrimination, bribery and fraud in the financial sectors, insatiability of corporations for power and wealth, and the sway that corporations and lobbyists hold over the government. (cited in Occupy Melbourne 2013)

A contributing factor to the minimal focus on Occupy Melbourne's cause in favour of foregrounding other issues may have been the importance to commercial news media of news values. These include the primacy of violence (Jewkes 2015), which comprised one of the dominant frames of the City Square newspaper coverage. The importance of violent conflict to newspapers, such as that foregrounded in the reportage, comes from its profitability (Berger 1989). Exploration of the issues put forward by Occupy Melbourne can therefore be seen as of secondary importance to entertaining the newspapers' audiences in order to make a profit; something which Herman and Chomsky (1988) have argued is the predominant concern of commercial media beholden to advertisers.

Although the quotes from Schoeffel and Davis-Sparke showed that Occupy Melbourne had some chance to self-identify, once the context of the quotes is taken into account it becomes evident that the news coverage subjugated them by using a frame that undermined their

cause. This trend makes clear the lack of influence the protesters had in framing the coverage from a perspective favourable for them. For example, although Schoeffel was able to state the group's view that economic inequality is unfair in a news text published by *The Age*, the central issue of the text was concerned with a completely different issue (see Webb 2011). Instead, it focused on what was portrayed as the peaceful nature of the protest by contrasting it to the past turbulent Rome and New York Occupy protest events (see Webb 2011). This inability of the protesters to substantially influence the frame of texts by inserting their own meanings in line with their concerns is further emphasised in 'Busy Protesters Fail to Maintain Rage' (Madden 2011). Indigo Davis-Sparke's explanation of the protest's purpose played no significant role in defining the frame of this news text. Instead, the text framed the Australia-based movement as unable to endure as long as its overseas counterparts. As a result, this served the purpose of characterising Occupy Melbourne as fleeting therefore futile. The text demonstrated this by focusing on the failure of members to commit to the protest. Davis-Sparke's inclusion emphasised this further as she was unable to persist in being a part of the protest camp because of other commitments: "Indigo Davis-Sparke spent the weekend at the Sydney protest, and while she will not be able to maintain the vigil this week – she has to return to acting school – the 20-year-old believes the sit-in has already achieved its aim" (cited in Madden 2014). The suggestion was that the protesters considered taking part in the protest to be of secondary importance to the 'regular' undertakings of their lives.

The analysis showed that the cause of protesters was also undermined by the newspapers in other ways. For example, Occupy Melbourne was labelled as an "anti-capitalism mob" by a news story published by *The Herald Sun* (cited in Wright and Harris 2011). Use of the term "mob", as discussed above, suggested a homogenous, threatening group. But the label "anti-

capitalist” revealed a dissonance with Occupy Melbourne’s self-identification; which suggests though they may be left-wing, they are more moderate than the appellation “anti-capitalist” would suggest. Ultimately, the inability of protesters to greatly influence the coverage by being able to define the protest in a way that favourably foregrounded their cause critical of capitalism was consistent with the concept of cultural hegemony. This is because the theory posits that counter-arguments which challenge hegemony take place only within certain social parameters in commercial news media (Schlesinger 1990).

The Brisbane G20 Protests Newspaper Coverage

Unlike the coverage of the City Square protest, the predominant concern identified in the Brisbane G20 coverage was the security of the summit’s venue at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. As a result of this security focus, the news texts analysed were predominantly framed from a law and order perspective. This was manifested in two main ways reflective of the dates on which the news texts were published. Those news texts from the lead up to the 15-16 November summit, before a majority of protests were carried out, tended to focus on the measures put in place by police to ensure the summit kept troublesome protesters out. These texts generally featured a conflict frame, visible in their foregrounding of the disagreeable response of protest groups antagonistic towards the security measures. Because this hostility was a central focus, the news texts created an impression that protesters had the potential to engage in rebellious or unruly behaviour because of their opposition to the security procedures. Conversely, the coverage during the summit was concerned with the tactical success of police in maintaining order. The conclusion drawn was that police had successfully controlled the protesters. The Brisbane G20 coverage focused on radical protest groups or individuals who were framed as likely to (or indeed did) disrupt the summit while not identifying radical protesters who complied with the laws put in place. The effect of this

was similar to the City Square reportage, as the causes of radical groups critical of capitalism received minimal attention. However, the causes of mainstream protest groups and the Queensland Greens who attended the G20 were presented without the negative connotations the radical protesters had carried.

There were 14 news texts from before the summit which highlighted the strict security measures put in place by authorities in an attempt to ensure protesters were disciplined. The coverage foregrounded some of the measures police either claimed they would implement or had implemented. This included a ban on head coverings, drawing up a police prohibited persons' list, which excluded certain people from the G20 "declared" areas, an implication that sonic cannons might be used as a crowd control device, and the closure of certain streets (see Atfield 2014; Elks 2014; Moore 2014; Sinnerton 2014). These news texts emphasised protesters' hostile responses to the measures. In doing so, as with the City Square coverage, a conflict frame was salient in much of the reporting with the focus on the protesters' oppositional stance serving to demonstrate discord between protesters and police.

There was significant attention focused on verbal hostility between protesters and representatives of the police and government establishments. This was mostly confined to protesters criticising police over the security measures, which they considered "massive overkill" (qtd in Olding 2014). Overall, the protesters' responses to the measures were foregrounded in seven news texts before the summit. An example of this was evident in the position taken by BrisCAN-G20 towards the suggestions that sonic cannons may be deployed by Queensland Police to control protesters (see Atfield 2014). Adrian Skeritt, speaking on behalf of the group, was shown to be critical of this possibility, offering a warning to police.

In doing so, he asserted his group's opposition to the use of sonic cannons, emphasising the illiberal character of what he termed "intimidation tactics":

You do not want to create the impression that all the civil liberties that are cherished are simply thrown away during this time and people's very basic democratic rights are denied to them... It would tell the world that... intimidation tactics will be used to try to curtail people's democratic expression. (qtd in Atfield 2014)

With the exception of BrisCAN-G20, this pre-summit conflict was most clearly articulated by the focus on anarchist group Anonymous' oppositional stance towards the ban on face or head coverings. Their vehement opposition was framed in such a way that it appeared it might lead to them flouting the laws, putting them in conflict with the police. Three news texts foregrounded the group's stated plans to circumvent laws banning people from wearing face coverings, such as masks (see Doorley et al. 2014; Murray et al. 2014; Sinnerton 2014). The group's response to the laws was not surprising as masks (specifically Guy Fawkes masks) are a signature of Anonymous (Vogler and Chamberlain 2013) and presumably this directive was targeted specifically at them. The group's attitude to the laws was revealed with this statement in a news text published by *The Courier Mail*: "Our rights are being violated with the G20 laws and we do not need to comply [sic]" (qtd in Murray et al. 2014). The coverage made it evident that, because of their hostility towards the measures, Anonymous intended to undermine the laws by donning burqas: "Anonymous members, who usually cover their faces with trademark vendetta masks, are colluding to wear the religious garb, which is not on a prohibited list" (cited in Sinnerton 2014). The suggestion that members of the group were "colluding" framed their efforts to undermine the summit laws as insidious, which characterised the group as not merely uncooperative, but criminal. Although not

strictly illegal, their plan was framed in such a way that it highlighted their defiance of police, ultimately blurring the line between criminal and deviant. This was demonstrated by the police response, which was to warn Anonymous that failure to abide by the law could lead to their arrest (see Murray et al. 2014). It should be noted, however, that despite the coverage framing the group as intending to wear the burqa as a sign of protest, Anonymous themselves denied this was their plan (see Doorley et al. 2014). The framing of Anonymous as uncooperative and potentially criminal reinforces the Althusserian argument that those who adopt an alternative ideology to the dominant ideology (“bad subjects”) are met with obloquy (Gray 2005), presumably through ISAs such as the communications apparatus.

The pre-summit news coverage drew on conflict when focusing on protesters who may have been a disruptive influence on the event. Boykoff found that one of the primary frames of the “Battle of Seattle” protests was a disruption frame (2006: 211). In the case of the Brisbane G20 protests, this usually entailed foregrounding radical groups such as Anonymous, although it also extended to highlighting individuals who stated a refusal to comply with police orders such as “Christian Anarchist” Ciaran O’Reilly (cited in Elks 2014). Because the impending event was frequently framed as likely to become a site of disorder, a speculative tone pervaded much of the pre-summit coverage. Elite sources expressed concern in this coverage that protesters liable to cause trouble may be attracted to the summit protests. For example, in ‘Police Keep Lid on Plans for Protests’, it was reported that “police have admitted they are concerned the ‘peaceful actions’ could be hijacked by activists” (cited in *The Courier Mail* 2014). This excerpt suggested that radical protesters averse to the peaceful undertaking of the protest may take control of the peaceful event (“hijacked”). Interestingly, there was nothing else in the sentence which seemed to justify viewing these hypothetical protests as disorderly, which suggests that the concern may have been disproportionate to the

likelihood of the threat. Some elite sources selected by the newspapers believed there was little doubt that troublesome or even dangerous protesters would appear at the event. Terry O’Gorman, President of the Council for Civil Liberties, was critical of the lack of transparency of the police overseeing the Brisbane G20 summit. His perspective was that the public had a right to know about the protests so that innocent bystanders could avoid what the news text referred to as “violent outbreaks” (cited in *The Courier Mail* 2014). O’Gorman considered such “violent outbreaks” to be inevitable, an incongruous stance, as a civil libertarian would be expected to support the protesters against the state.

A similar view which depicted aspects of the protests as foreseeably violent was put forward by a report published by security services provider International SOS. The report warned companies to ensure that their employees kept away from the dangerous areas of the event (see Doorley 2014). Although the report admitted that most protests “are likely to be nonviolent” it believed that others might involve “hardline activists known for carrying out disruptive activities and staging publicity stunts” (qtd. in Doorley 2014). The combination of “publicity stunts” and “hardline activists” implied that at least some protests would be the site of disorderly, if not criminal conduct. This framing contributed to a characterisation that the protests would be unruly or even violent, as they could be infiltrated by troublesome individuals or groups. Donson et al. (2004) made similar findings in their study of London anti-capitalist protests, arguing that the protesters were represented as what Cohen referred to as “folk devils” as there was an emphasis on their potential to cause violence and anarchy (Cohen 1972/2011: 2; Donson et al 2004). This alludes to the contentious relationship between protesters and commercial news media: on the one hand, because news media is more likely to report an event if it is sensationalistic, there is a necessity that protesters engage in disruptive or conflict-laden behaviour in order to receive attention (Lester 2007;

Rojecki 2002). On the other hand, this may not be favourable for the protesters, as reportage can ignore the protest's cause and focus only on its negative aspects (Craig 2002).

The possibility of unruliness and violence marring the Brisbane G20 protests underlined the foregrounding of the economic consequences of the event before the summit. Economic consequences were the predominant frame of four news texts. These texts speculated that disorderly G20 protests might negatively affect local business profits or injure bystanders, who would have a right to claim compensation as a result. The reportage was concerned with presenting the protests as a hindrance to retail revenue. In this way, the coverage was similar to the use of the economic consequences frame evident in the reporting on the City Square protest. This is because the frame was also personalised in a comparable way: "South Bank small-business owners will foot the damage bill if anarchy ensues from G20 protests; a business group has warned just days from the world leaders' summit" (cited in Stephens 2014).

The suggestion, defined by Business South Bank, was that if the protests were to become unruly those operating small businesses would suffer. This was elaborated on by Business South Bank chairman Barton Green, who attempted to discourage potential protesters from engaging in riotous behaviour: "The business community of South Bank is primarily made up of small businesses, built on sweat and determination, that employ thousands of workers... keep that in mind if you have disruption and rampage on your agenda" (qtd in Stephens 2014). Green clearly wished to dissuade protesters from descending into disorder by appealing to their sense of sympathy for small business workers. This constructed the identities of the workers by positioning their industriousness as a positive attribute against the potentially negative behaviour of the protesters. By depicting them as possibly troublesome

(“disruption”) and riotous (“rampage”), Green was drawing on commonly accepted characterisations of protests in commercial news media (Boykoff 2006; McLeod 2000). The prominence given to Green by the reportage conforms with Hall et al’s (1978/2013) theory that the definitions of events inserted into the coverage, (mostly) by individuals representing institutions, are reproduced by commercial news media taking the role of secondary definer.

One of the criticisms of Hall et al’s theory is that it does not take adequate account of contention among primary definers (Schlesinger 1990). Indeed, the Brisbane G20 protest coverage case study does reveal disagreements between primary definers by showing a contrast between the views of Green and the local business operators. They disagreed with Green as they were unconcerned about the complications which may have arisen from protesters who engaged in chaotic behaviour. Instead, the views of small business people working in the affected area were critical of the security measures put in place by the authorities. They believed that conducting business in the exclusion zone would have been economically damaging. This represents the presence of a counter-frame in the coverage:

South Bank Physiotherapy's Rosemary Gades said being inside the security zone, [meant] her business was being forced to close from Wednesday onwards. She said it would be a tough week and damage from protesters was the least of her concerns. (cited in Stephens 2014)

Similar sentiments which stressed the role of the exclusion zone in turning customers away from nearby businesses, while downplaying the impact of protesters, were put forward by Rohan Topely, publican of Melbourne Road's Fox Hotel (see Elks 2014; Stephens 2014). This economic consequences frame differed from the emphasis in the City Square protest news coverage because it chiefly focused on the concern local business operators had that the security measures, not the protests, would negatively affect their revenue.

Despite this dominant characterisation shifting the blame levelled at the protesters by Green to the security measures, there was one local business owner concerned about the protests themselves. Tracy Mathers, the owner of multiple shops, contributed to the economic consequences frame by speculating that unruly protest groups would be present:

I'm shutting because I'm concerned, we've got that march on Saturday, and it's going straight outside our store... [The police] can't guarantee it's going to stay calm. (qtd. in Elks 2014)

By contrast, emphasis on the rights of members of the public to claim compensation if they were unintentionally caught up in the protests presented the event as potentially harmful to “innocent bystanders” (cited in Calligeros 2014). Reporting on this topic was informed by Mark O’Connor, a Brisbane compensation law expert, whose assertion was that those caught up in any violence caused by Brisbane G20 protesters could qualify for compensation if injured. O'Connor was shown to be of the opinion that, if the rioting of previous G20 summits in other countries was repeated in Brisbane, then “innocent bystanders” could be entitled to make a claim (cited in Calligeros 2014). This characterisation relied on a dominant depiction of similar protests as violent because it implied that the Brisbane G20 protests were likely to be dangerous for the “innocent” public. Danger was foregrounded similarly for the City Square protest, as there was a focus on members of the public being affected through no fault of their own. This confirms many of the findings in the pre-existing literature which identified that commercial news media has a tendency to frame protests as dangerous due to the depicted presence of, or potential for, violence (Donson et al. 2004; Smith et al 2001).

This emphasis on danger highlighted the impact elite primary definers had over the Brisbane G20 news coverage. The dominance of elite sources in commercial news media was highlighted by Herman and Chomsky (1988) who argued that this is because these sources are easy for an economically and time-limited media to access. This finding was highlighted in the Brisbane G20 newspaper coverage as it devoted substantially more textual space to quoting elites than to other sources. Of the 90 sources quoted, 65 (over 72 percent) were elites, while the remaining 25 (about 28 percent) were non-elite sources. As well as being featured more often, elites were typically the primary definers of the coverage. 49 of the 65 elite sources (or more than 75 percent) were selected as primary definers, while only nine non-elites (36 percent of non-elite sources) were selected as primary definers. A contributing factor to this may have been the unprecedented heatwave which undoubtedly deterred many protesters from attending the summit (see Bochenski 2014). As a result, there may have been less potential for journalistic access to the voices of protesters.

The prominence of elite primary definers was evident as there was significant attention given to their speculation that disruptive groups or individuals would be involved in the protests. This speculation constituted a dominant frame of the pre-summit coverage. Elite concerns were partly vindicated in three news texts just before the 15 November summit. As well as revealing that an allegedly uncooperative man was arrested for taking photos on the steps of the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, this coverage focused on protesters' infiltration of the "declared zone" (see Atfield 2014; Doorley 2014). The infiltration was perpetrated by protest group Dirty Work who installed projectors disguised as cameras in this area close to the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre (see Braithwaite and Murray 2014). Their purpose was to cast anti-G20 slogans onto a suitable surface in order, in their own words, "to sidestep the suppression of our democratic right to protest in security zones"

(qtd in Murray 2014). The news text's focus on this press release adhered to the typical characterisation of radical protest groups in the coverage; they were motivated to transgress the law by their opposition to the security measures.

While the coverage prior to the summit was typified by a concern with the potential that protesters would be disruptive (or, in the case of the unnamed man and Dirty Work, those who were characterised as having defied the law), the news texts published during the event framed authorities as successful in maintaining order. Of the 17 texts published just after the commencement of the summit, 10 had this as the focus of coverage. As the protests were overwhelmingly conducted peacefully, with only isolated infringements mentioned in the newspapers, the texts ultimately framed the security measures as achieving their aims. This was encapsulated by a news story published by the *Courier Mail*: "The fortress around Brisbane paid off for authorities yesterday after G20 protests caused little disruption or violence" (cited in Doorley 2014). The extent of the authorities' achievement was described by detailing the vastness of the protests: "Despite more than 2,000 protesters marching across the city, many with different causes, police arrested just four protesters for trespass or having prohibited items" (cited in Doorley 2014). The implication was that, due to the large number of protesters involved in the event, there was a strong likelihood that disorderly or criminal behaviour would occur. There was also attention paid to the diversity of the groups involved. The fact that this was emphasised seemed to imply that authorities had been especially successful in maintaining calm as the presence of protest groups with different causes would tend to lead to conflict. To make this case, of the authorities' success, the newspapers had to ignore the inherent peacefulness of protesters while foregrounding the possibility of disorder.

Ultimately, this reflected the dominant pattern of the news texts subsequent to the G20 summit, most of which portrayed police favourably for maintaining law and order. The newspapers' attributed this accomplishment to the utilisation of peaceful means, as police were framed as refraining from arresting protesters where possible. Before the summit took place, *The Courier Mail* stressed that police intended to only arrest protesters as a last resort, as they would warn potential lawbreakers wherever they could (see Doorley et al. 2014). In coverage during the event, this warning strategy was revealed to have been the employment of negotiation tactics with protesters. Although the protests were ultimately conducted peacefully, the fact that the coverage made it clear that authorities had to discourage some protesters from engaging in illegal activities characterised the protesters as inherently turbulent. The protests were depicted as likely sites of lawbreaking and chaos which were only prevented by a competent police force:

Instead of being manhandled, dragged away and thrown in paddy wagons, protesters were handled with kid gloves. Teams of specialist police negotiators formed the front line at protests around the city. (cited in Stolz et al. 2014)

Police were depicted in this text as refraining from physically dealing with protesters (unlike the City Square protest coverage), instead opting to take the initiative in bringing about a positive outcome through discussion.

Although this frame may have tacitly represented the protests as mostly peaceful, it ultimately implied that the protesters were volatile. The coverage characterised the police as protectors of society in dissuading the various protest groups from becoming disorderly. It showed that there were indeed some offenders at the protests; however, it was only via their deft handling by police that ensured any complications were averted. The specific methods police employed were revealed to involve negotiating with offenders as well as establishing

“relationships” with them (cited in Murray 2014). This was instead of responding to troublesome protesters with force (see Murray 2014). In the case of certain protesters wearing prohibited Guy Fawkes masks, the news framed officers’ behaviour as lenient, as they deliberately refused to arrest certain individuals, instead opting to reach a compromise (see Australian Associated Press 2014). The peaceful approach they took was exemplified by foregrounding what is dubbed by a news text published by *The Courier Mail* as “water bottle diplomacy” (cited in Murray 2014). This focus attributed tactical success to officers for handing out bottled water to protesters during a hot day. The suggestion, in *The Courier Mail*, was that because police had built “relationships” with protesters they had kept them on side, therefore assuring that they remained law abiding. This was evidenced by *The Courier Mail*’s assessment of the “water bottle diplomacy”:

It's a key factor in Brisbane's remarkable staging of a safe and peaceful G20 leaders' summit. At rally after rally over recent days, organisers thanked the G20 police. (cited in Murray 2014)

By framing the safety and peacefulness of the summit as a considerable (“remarkable”) accomplishment for police, the implication was that the protests had been very likely to be unsafe and hostile but for the “water bottle diplomacy”.

Positive depictions of police such as these have, in previous research, been found to predominate in commercial news media (Dowler 2002; McGovern and Lee 2010). Although commercial news media has been found to represent police less favourably than entertainment media, such as reality television and news tabloid programs, research suggests that the dominant media trend is to represent police in a positive light (Dowler and Zawilski 2007). The symbiosis between the police establishment and commercial news media contributes to officers’ generally favourable treatment in coverage (McGovern and Lee

2010). Factors such as the perceived reliability and ease of access of press releases issued by police media units make these sources attractive to time-restricted and resource-limited reporters (Dowler and Zawilski 2010; Hall et al. 1978/2013; McGovern and Lee 2010). However, it is important to note that the relationship between police and commercial news media can vary, as evidenced by the recent negative coverage of police misconduct towards African Americans in the United States (McLaughlin 2015).

The paradigm of foregrounding the tactical success of the police led to little attention focused on the fact that the protesters being generally law-abiding must have contributed to this success. The implication in the newspapers was that the protesters were prone to engaging in criminal behaviour motivated by an opposition to the security measures, while the police had been successful in preventing the protests from becoming chaotic. This ultimately failed to credit protesters for co-operating with police and thus following the law. Instead, the peacefulness of the protests was solely attributed to the success of authorities. Radical protesters or groups were specified only if they had disrupted the event or were deemed likely to do so; as was the case with the pre-summit coverage, which included specific mention of Anonymous and “Christian Anarchist” Ciaran O’Reilly. During the summit, Dirty Work was named.

As the protests were conducted in an orderly fashion, the coverage during the summit only referred specifically to several individuals who presented problems for authorities, or, in the case of the Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance (WAR), a group speculated to be problematic. WAR is a radical protest group accorded attention in two news texts, with one solely focused on their efforts in attending the Brisbane G20. It was emphasised in a story published by *The Courier Mail* that there would be hundreds of “youthful” protesters raising

awareness of global capitalism's impact on Aboriginal children being placed in damaging foster care (cited in Madigan 2014). What this means exactly is never specified as the text's primary concern was with the methods the group intended to employ during future protests. Despite the group adhering to the law, the text framed them as "ready to cause serious disruption" (cited in Madigan 2014). The selection of protester Callum Clayton-Dixton's comment that "if direct action is needed, we will use it" (qtd. in Madigan 2014) showed the coverage's focus on the potential of radical protest groups to disrupt the event. This was indicated further in the news text by *The Courier Mail's* suggestion that: "direct action... is open to interpretation" and that "those connected with WAR say if violence does occur in the next few days, it will stem from Warriors taking steps to protect themselves from police provocation" (cited in Madigan 2014). The effect of this was to characterise the group as hostile towards police with an implication that their animosity would potentially lead to violent conflict.

WAR were also negatively framed in another news text when they were described as "boisterous" in the *Brisbane Times* (cited in Atfield and Stephens 2014) which similarly may imply that they were likely to be disorderly or even aggressive. The emphasis of these texts on the potential for violence mostly ignored WAR's motivation for protesting, offering only minimal and vague information about their cause (see Madigan 2014). The framing of WAR was related to the broader issue of the event's security, which was the main focus of the Brisbane G20 coverage.

While the coverage of WAR characterised the group as potentially aggressive, the few protesters who had broken the law during the summit were individualised:

A 25-year-old woman was charged with possession of restricted items after police searched a bag and allegedly found a gas mask and a weapon. She will appear in court on December 4. After the march, a 44-year-old Dinmore man was charged for wearing a Guy Fawkes mask linked to the hacktivist group Anonymous. (cited in Bochenski 2014)

This extract revealed a foregrounding of protest group Anonymous, which was frequent in the coverage because of the group's vehement opposition to the ban on masks. It also drew on a pattern reflective of the framing of deviant or law-breaking radical protesters in the coverage; the illegal actions they had perpetrated were specified. Because Anonymous protesters have a cause opposed to the capitalist system, this finding can be seen as consistent with literature that has found those who assert a perspective which transgresses the social parameters of commercial news media quite often have their illegal behaviour emphasised (Hall et al. 1978/2013).

The focus on the deviance of radical groups served to ensure that their causes were only mentioned if they had broken the law or were framed as likely to break the law. Despite this focus on deviance, there was some engagement with the causes of various law-abiding protest groups throughout the newspaper coverage. However, these were all mainstream protest groups suitably represented by elite primary definers, clearly showing the secondary definer role of commercial news media as chiefly a reproducer of the definitions of elite primary definers which pays little attention to counter-definitions (Hall et al. 1978/2013). A summary of the various mainstream protests was given by a news text published by the *Brisbane Times*: "The rally is a wide-ranging coalition of different interest groups protesting over everything from indigenous rights and climate change inaction to the mistreatment of refugees, coal seam gas and corporate greed" (cited in Australian Associated Press 2014).

This characterisation served to depict those involved in the protest as heterogeneous. If anything united these disparate groups it was their concern with criticisms of capitalism's impact on various social issues (although admittedly a concern with "mistreatment of refugees" may not be related to a criticism of capitalism).

There was noticeably more textual space devoted to foregrounding some of these issues at the centre of the protests than was evident in the City Square protest news coverage. This was demonstrated by the fact that there were two news texts almost completely devoted to exploring the causes of protesters by giving a voice to representatives of certain mainstream groups; while there was no single story in the City Square coverage that did this. The two news texts were 'G20 Protests Begin on First Official Day of Summit' (Silva 2014) and 'G20 Brisbane: Passionate, but Mostly Peaceful Protests' (Atfield and Stephens 2014). The former text primarily focused on a cluster of nurses opposed to privatisation of health services (see Silva 2014). They were imploring then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott to embark on progressive tax reform, seeking a tax which they believed would prevent privatisation (see Silva 2014). The second news text paid particular attention to climate change by foregrounding The Climate Guardians protest group and Senator Larissa Waters of the Queensland Greens. This focus on mainstream groups and the issues that inform their politics may be an indication of the marginalisation of groups who dissent from the 'common sense' understandings of the world put forward by news media (Buttigieg 2005). Senator Waters' comments on climate change were indirectly critical of capitalism as she condemned the summit's focus on economic profiteering:

They're talking about growth on a finite planet, which, frankly, is the definition of madness. Out here, it's a really hot day, isn't it? Lucky climate

change is crap or we'd all be in a spot of bother. (qtd. in Atfield and Stephens 2014)

This excerpt demonstrated the intersections of the economic cause of G20 protest groups with other issues, which was mostly absent from the City Square protest coverage, as Occupy Melbourne were characterised by the newspapers as chiefly concerned with economic issues. Although the predominant concern of the Brisbane G20 coverage in general was the security of the event, these two news texts offered some detail of mainstream protest groups' and the Queensland Greens' causes.

Synthesis of Findings

The conflict frame permeated almost all of the City Square and a large portion of the Brisbane G20 protest news coverage. Although both sets of coverage featured conflict, there was a key difference between their respective foci. The City Square protest elicited more of an emphasis on the physical conflict between protesters and police because of the chaotic nature of the event, while the Brisbane G20 coverage primarily demonstrated nonviolent verbal hostility by highlighting protesters' oppositional views to the security measures. This was because disorderly and violent scenes which characterised the Occupy Melbourne protest were absent from the Brisbane G20 news coverage. In this way, the City Square protest can be seen as more closely exemplifying some of the findings of previous literature showing that protest violence tends to be the focus of news media coverage (Cammaerts 2013; Donson et al. 2004). By contrast, the analysis of the Brisbane G20 newspaper coverage contributes a new finding to the literature by showing that the conflict focused on by the newspapers can also stem from verbal hostility. Nevertheless, findings of both case studies foregrounded verbal hostility between protesters and authorities. Because of this, the findings reveal a

different definitional approach to the conflict frame than that indicated in the majority of the pre-existing literature (Cammaerts 2013; Smith 2001).

The focus on the violence of the City Square protest tended to characterise the event as a site of danger, just as assertions made by several elite primary definers before the G20 summit characterised the impending protests as likely to be chaotic and violent. The City Square protest coverage was most clearly articulated by emphasising how the protest posed a threat towards certain elites, children, and more broadly, bystanders. In the case of the Brisbane G20 coverage, elite primary definers characterised disorderly protests as inevitable. However, the coverage of the Brisbane G20 protests did not foreground one instance of a violent episode, for the obvious reason that they were either non-existent or kept to a minimum. This runs counter to the findings of previous literature which have tended to show that protests critical of capitalism are typically represented as dangerous by focusing on the conflictual climate they are represented as evoking (Ward 1995).

Reportage subsequent to the Brisbane G20 did not frame the protests as chaotic and violent. Instead, the newspapers positively framed the measures implemented by the authorities. Police officers on the ground were presented as adept and ultimately successful at fostering cordial relationships with the potentially deviant (if not criminal) protesters they came into contact with. In this way, unlike the relationship portrayed between Occupy Melbourne protesters and police, the relationship between G20 protesters and police was framed as amiable. Although the protesters must have played a role in ensuring the summit was conducted peacefully, their achievement was excluded from the Brisbane G20 coverage, with their only characterisations being negative. The initiative police had taken was framed as effectively placating protesters which ensured they conformed to the G20 laws. By contrast,

the City Square protest coverage presented officers negatively as officers were characterised as controlling protesters through excessive force, with the reportage including criticisms of that excess from Occupy Melbourne protesters and some elite sources. This stemmed from the fact that the eviction of protesters from Melbourne City Square was not conducted peacefully. Overall, in contrast to the Brisbane G20 coverage, commentary by protesters on police conduct was generally negative. In fact, the main reason protesters were given a voice in the City Square coverage was to express their hostility towards police and Lord Mayor Robert Doyle for their treatment. This reflects the finding of some pre-existing literature that negative portrayals of police can be featured in newspapers (Weitzer 2002). However, the Brisbane G20 news coverage complies with the literature that has found police to be generally portrayed positively in media overall (McGovern and Lee 2010). This was achieved in the G20 coverage by focusing on proactive police activity, in line with the research of Dowler (2002).

The focus on economic consequences was another dominant frame shared by both case studies. In the City Square protest, the effects on local businesses operators were foregrounded by highlighting their frustration at the fact that they saw the protest as threatening their livelihoods. Brisbane G20-affected small business owners, on the other hand, mostly ascribed blame to the existence of the G20 restricted zone. In both cases, coverage personalised the economic consequences of the protests, portraying the events as economically deleterious because they negatively impacted on people. In this way, the case studies diverged in respect of the use of the economic consequences frame.

The foregrounding of the economic consequences frame revealed a capitalist logic at work in the coverage of both protests. This was because the focus was mostly centred on how the

protests would negatively affect profits by threatening business operators, who were characterised as hardworking. It was depicted as being of the utmost importance that these businesses be allowed to operate unhindered. As the economic consequences frame saw an implicit depiction of both profiteering and the labour required to achieve this in a positive way, it thus valued them. Ultimately, this reflected the findings of the literature, the authors of which have argued that commercial media normalises and consequently values work within the capitalism system (Wright and Roberts 2013). Furthermore, Althusser posited that an ideological state apparatus (such as commercial news media) disseminates a capitalist ideology (Althusser 1971). In contrast to the case study findings of this thesis, some have argued that commercial news media does quite often challenge the status quo, even taking on the role as an agent of change in some cases (Altheide 1984). The predominance of the economic consequences frame within the news texts of the City Square protest coverage saw minimal scrutiny of this system, as Occupy Melbourne's cause was completely ignored in these news texts. That the coverage centred on the economic consequences of the events ultimately revealed a hegemonic function of the newspapers. This was because they presented a selection of primary definers who disseminated a 'common sense' understanding about the local business operations which excluded radical criticisms of the system the primary definers operate within (Lull 2010).

The findings of the case studies highlighted the role of elite primary definers in ensuring that their dominant perspectives, most often critical of the protests, prevailed. A primary reason for this was because elites constituted almost 69 percent of the total number of sources quoted across both case studies, leaving only 31 percent who were non-elites. Furthermore, elites comprised almost 84 percent of sources selected as primary definers, while non-elite sources made up just 16 percent of primary definers. The prominence of elite sources allowed

them to substantially contribute to the framing of the newspaper coverage of both protests. Consequently, there tended to be a predominant focus on issues unrelated or unfavourable for the causes of protesters. This was foregrounded by a dominant focus on the views of elite representatives of the government and police who were mostly antagonistic towards the protests. This was most evident in the City Square protest coverage. For example, Cr Doyle and assistant commissioner Stephen Fontana successfully attributed responsibility to protesters for preventing members of the public from entering the CBD. In this way, the protesters were portrayed as a fringe group, separate from the public. This highlighted the effect of news framing as a power attribution device. In the literature on framing, Lawrence (2010) argued that journalists adjust news stories to reflect their perceptions of power. The case studies in this thesis indicate the validity of her assertion that “to study framing is to study power” (Lawrence 2000: 278).

It was also shown in both case studies that the perspectives of elite primary definers can be challenged by commercial news media. The actions of Cr Doyle in ordering police to disperse Occupy Melbourne protesters were occasionally critiqued. This was achieved through a focus on the counter-definitions of protesters who felt they were being dealt with brutally, while the security measures announced before the G20 summit were challenged by protesters and local business operators. However, for their part, the protesters were usually presented as likely to demonstrate their displeasure with the G20 laws by breaking them. As a result, this nullified the weight of their perspective. Despite this, these findings comply with the literature that has highlighted several criticisms of the primary definer and secondary definer theory (Hall et al. 1978/2013). The most pertinent for these case studies is Schlesinger’s (1990) assertion that Hall et al. (1978/2013) fail to take into account the fact that news media can offer challenges to the accounts given by elite primary definers.

While there was a significant emphasis on the definitions offered by elites in the newspaper coverage, there was only minimal attention devoted to the causes of radical protesters. For example, Occupy Melbourne's cause was not the dominant focus of the few news texts in which Occupy Melbourne protesters were given a chance to articulate the reason behind their protest. This confirms some of the findings in the literature which have shown that the cause of protesters is generally not the focus of news coverage (Scalmer 2002; Ward 1995).

However, the findings of the analysis of the City Square protest news coverage conflicts with the literature which found that an initial focus on the more sensationalist aspects of protests can see a shift to an emphasis on the issues protesters seek to raise (Rojecki 2002). As evidenced by the City Square protest case study findings, the presence of spectacle, either intentionally or unintentionally instigated by protesters, worked against their interests. For example, the refusal of protesters to comply with the government's demands that they leave City Square led to violent scenes between protesters and police. This elicited a predominant focus of the newspapers which mostly served to characterise the protesters (and less frequently the police and the government) negatively. This highlights the necessity, outlined in the literature review, of protesters having control over the spectacle so as to prevent negative characterisations by news media (Scalmer 2002).

While the City Square coverage had only a minimal engagement with the cause of Occupy Melbourne members, due to the predominance of the conflict and economic consequences frames, the Brisbane G20 coverage had more of a focus on the issues informing some of the various protest groups. However, those given most attention were reflective of mainstream values, with the causes of radical groups largely ignored. The causes of such 'fringe' groups

were only highlighted when they were engaging, or potentially engaging, in behaviour defying the G20 laws. The news texts of both protests mostly addressed the presence of radical protest groups only by highlighting their dissidence or, in the case of the City Square protest, their conflict with the government and police establishment. This highlights the importance of conflict as a value to news media (Jewkes 2015). This characterisation of radical protest groups in the case studies was demonstrated in the literature to be a common approach taken by commercial news media towards radical groups. As Buttigieg (2005) and Ward (1995) found, this focus entails denunciation and consequent marginalisation of groups considered to be a threat to the current economic and political structure. This may also be a reflection of Herman and Chomsky's (1988) finding that mainstream media is negatively affected by corporations who pressure it to embrace a more right wing cause.

Ultimately, radical protest groups such as Anonymous and Dirty Work failed to insert their cause, the overthrow of capitalism, into the coverage. The less radical cause of Occupy Melbourne, on the other hand, received some attention. This reflects news media performing a public sphere role (albeit, a limited one), as it is said to facilitate public debate (Dahlgren 1995). Nonetheless, Occupy Melbourne were unable to define the news coverage in terms favourable for them. This supports the argument found in some of the pre-existing research that a counter-hegemony which challenges the 'common sense' values disseminated by commercial news media can receive, at best, limited attention in this medium (Lull 2010). The presence of protesters' ideas, critical of capitalism, in the reportage reflects Wayne's (2003) findings that though cultural hegemony generally benefits the existing social and economic system, through commercial news media there is the potential for this to be contested by individuals or groups. Ultimately, the dominance of elite primary definers

coupled with the inability of radical protesters to offer a comparatively effective counter-frame of the events demonstrates Hall's contention that:

Some things, people, events, relationships always get represented: always centre-stage, always in the position to define, to set the cause, to establish the terms of the conversation. Some others sometimes get represented – but always at the margin, always responding to a question whose terms and conditions have been defined elsewhere: never 'centred'. (1986: 9)

Conclusion

“If you are white, male, a businessman or a politician or a professional or a celebrity, your chances of getting represented [by commercial news media] will be very high. If you are black or a woman without social status', or poor or working class or gay or powerless because you are marginal, you will always have to fight to get heard or seen.” – Stuart Hall (1986: 9)

This thesis has aimed to show how 21st Century protests critical of capitalism have been characterised by Australian commercial news media. In order to do this, the newspaper coverage of the Melbourne City Square protest and Brisbane G20 protests were analysed. Through this analysis, focusing on language and source selection, the predominant types of frames which depicted the protests were highlighted. Excerpts indicative of the overall framing of the protests were highlighted in order to support this analysis. The research investigated the role of primary definers in the news texts, analysing their ability to insert their meanings into the coverage and define it, thereby contributing to the framing of the protests. By doing so, the thesis sought to answer the questions: “how does Australian commercial news media characterise 21st Century protests critical of capitalism”, and “to what extent can protesters critical of capitalism insert their social, economic and political definitions into the news coverage?”

In answering these questions, the thesis has made a contribution to the literature on this issue. The findings of the thesis offered a different perspective from that made by authors who have argued that commercial news media does allow protesters to insert their causes into coverage (DeLuca and Peebles 2002; Rojecki 2002). Analysis of the protest coverage central in this thesis found that radical protesters struggled to define the coverage in terms favourable for their causes critical of capitalism.

The findings also differ from that literature which points to disorderly and violent framing of protests as being responsible for ignoring radical groups' and individuals' purposes for protesting (Cammaerts 2005; Gitlin 1980; Ward 1995). This is because it was shown that there were other ways that the protests were depicted negatively. Although framing the protests as disorderly or potentially disorderly certainly contributed to making them appear conflict-laden, with a minimal focus on their motives for protesting, a predominant way this was achieved in the coverage of both events was by emphasising non-violent verbal hostility between protesters and authorities.

Another finding of the case studies which offers a different contribution from that already made by the pre-existing literature concerns how the protests were represented as dangerous or likely to be dangerous to innocent bystanders and the prosperity of businesses. This was mentioned in the literature review; however, the literature provides no examples of this in operation and fails to identify which groups or individuals tend to be framed as endangered (Donson et al. 2004). Similarly, while analysis of the coverage found that it was mostly the protests that were framed as culpable in preventing businesses from operating normally, such characterisations were not present in the reviewed literature. In this way, this thesis has contributed a new understanding which found that economic consequences can be a predominant frame of news texts covering protests critical of capitalism and can serve to characterise protests negatively.

The thesis also identified the ability of elite primary definers to characterise the protests and protesters. This supports the work of Bowers (2011) and Hall et al. (1978/2013), who found that elites are more likely than non-elites to be primary definers in news coverage.

Research for this thesis encountered a couple of limitations in showing how the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests were characterised by Australian commercial newspapers.

Although the thesis defined the Brisbane G20 protests as predominantly critical of capitalism, this was potentially an inaccurate generalisation as not all groups or individuals involved were motivated by this cause. To mitigate this weakness, the thesis focused on the framing of protest groups that were in fact motivated by a criticism of capitalism. However, as a few individuals with unstated purposes received attention in the analysis, it is contentious whether all of the findings directly contributed an answer to the research questions of the thesis.

Another limitation of the case studies was their scope. Because the research for the case studies central in this thesis was confined to newspapers, the studies were limited to analysing the characterisations offered by one media platform. Although the analyses made many crucial findings concerning Australian commercial newspapers' characterisation of 21st Century protests critical of capitalism, a focus on other media forms – such as broadcast media – would widen the scope of the research and may produce different findings.

Despite their importance, the findings of these case studies central in the thesis cannot necessarily be applied to all protests critical of capitalism and their coverage in commercial news media. Although the findings do contribute to and extend existing studies in this area, they are not generalisable. To better understand the relationship between Australian commercial news media and 21st Century protests critical of capitalism, there is a need for

more analysis of case studies to be conducted. This could entail a focus on other media forms, such as Australian commercial television or radio, in order to analyse their characterisations of these types of protests. This could be achieved by building upon the findings made by the two case studies by investigating the framing of these events in Australian commercial television news bulletins or radio transmissions. Exploring the coverage of other Australian manifestations of the Occupy movement (such as the protests held in Martin Place, Sydney) (Rintoul 2011) would also be beneficial for furthering understanding in response to the research questions.

In the current studies however, Australian commercial news media was ultimately shown to have failed in its duty as a facilitator of public discussion in regard to the City Square and Brisbane G20 protests. The coverage of both events rarely foregrounded the political or economic perspectives of the radical protesters involved as those involved were not especially successful in inserting the rationales behind their protest into the coverage. The few examples that showed members of these groups inserting the issues that concern them into the news texts were unfavourable for the protesters. This is because they were ultimately trivialised by the context in which they appeared – by the predominance of negative characterisations, or by the fact that there was more of a focus on elite voices with views antagonistic to the protests. The thesis found that Australian commercial news media emphasised only limited criticisms of the capitalist system offered by mainstream 21st Century protest groups and one political party. Conversely, radical groups had great difficulty in making their causes known without their messages being characterised negatively and thus diminished.

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Appendices

The Melbourne City Square Protest Newspaper News Texts

News Text Title	Publication	Author	Date
1. Rally Occupies Itself in Most Polite Company	<i>Sunday Age</i>	Stark, Jill	16 Oct 2011
2. Busy Protesters Fail to Maintain Rage	<i>The Australian</i>	Madden, James	17 Oct 2011
3. Mixed Reception for Queen on Whirlwind Visit	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Wright, Anne, Thompson, Angus, Van den Berg, Lucie.	18 Oct 2011
4. Campers Mellow Pitch for Solidarity	<i>The Age</i>	Webb, Carolyn	19 Oct 2011
5. Campers Happy, But the Traders Aren't	<i>The Age</i>	Webb, Carolyn	20 Oct 2011
6. Notice for Protesters	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Wright, Anne	20 Oct 2011
7. Move Them out by the Weekend	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Wright, Anne	21 Oct 2011

8. Doyle Accused of Heavy-Handedness in Halting City Square Occupation	<i>The Age</i>	Preiss, Benjamin, Sexton, Reid and Millar, Paul	22 Oct 2011
9. Cost of Action Yet to be Felt	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Mickelborough, Peter and Butler, Mark	22 Oct 2011
10. No Backward Step as Protests go on Police Defend Use of Tough Tactics	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Mickelborough, Peter and Harris, Amelia	22 Oct 2011
11. Texting all Hands: Anti-Capitalists use Corporate Gadgets to Galvanise their Protest	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Wright, Anne and Harris, Anne	22 Oct 2011
12. Police Chief Defends Use of Force	<i>Weekend Australian</i>	Rintoul, Stuart	22 Oct 2011
13. Doyle Unrepentant as Protesters Consider Action	<i>Sunday Age</i>	Munro, Peter, Gough, Deborah and Russell, Mark	23 Oct 2011
14. Protesters to Camp in Treasury Gardens	<i>Sunday Herald Sun</i>	White, Alex, Hewitt, Sue, Toy, Mitchell	23 Oct 2011
15. Woman with Child Slammed	<i>Sunday Herald Sun</i>	Campbell, James	23 Oct 2011
16. Lessons Learnt from First Crackdown	<i>The Australian</i>	Rintoul, Stuart	24 Oct 2011
17. Police Study Protest Footage	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Wright, Anne	24 Oct 2011
18. Protesters May Target Royal Visit	<i>The Age</i>	Millar, Paul, Sexton, Reid and Gordon, Josh	25 Oct 2011

19. Councillor Flags Probe on Eviction	<i>The Age</i>	Perkins, Miki	25 Oct 2011
20. Greens Adviser and Candidate Helped Organise Occupy Melbourne Sit-In	<i>The Australian</i>	Ferguson, John	25 Oct 2011
21. Mob Turns on Cops	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Butler, Mark and Drill, Stephen	26 Oct 2011
22. Protest Scuffle Moves Online	<i>Herald Sun</i>	Craven, Jessica	26 Oct 2011

Brisbane G20 Protests Newspaper News Texts

News Text Title	Publication	Author	Date
1. Welcome to the Red Zone	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil	08 Nov 2014
2. Anonymous Ban Sends Protesters Bur-ser-qa	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Sinnerton, Jackie	08 Nov 2014
3. Police Use G20 Powers to Arrest Man, Question Woman	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Atfield, Cameron	08 Nov 2014

4. Security Firm Tips Disruption From Today	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil	08 Nov 2014
5. 'Sonic Cannons' to be Deployed During G20	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Atfield, Cameron	09 Nov 2014
6. Police Keep Lid on Plans for Protests	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Anon	09 Nov 2014
7. Cops Hope to Make no Arrests	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil, McKenna, Kate and Kyriacou, Kate	09 Nov 2014
8. G20 Brisbane: Compensation for G20 Protest 'Victims'	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Calligeros, Marissa	10 Nov 2014
9. South Bank Traders Fear Biggest Hit from Profit Loss	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Stephens, Kim	10 Nov 2014
10. Injured in a Riot? Claim for Compo	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil	10 Nov 2014
11. First Road Closes for G20 Brisbane Protest March	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Calligeros, Marissa	10 Nov 2014
12. Show us Your Face or Face Arrest	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Murray, David, Madigan, Michael and Snowdon, Tom	11 Nov 2014
13. Fortress Brisbane Security Breach	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Braithwaite, Heidi and Murray, David	12 Nov 2014
14. Retail Downturn Amid security	<i>The Australian</i>	Elks, Sarah	13 Nov 2014

15. Activists Call for Lone Wolves to go on Protest Prowl	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Snowdon, Tom and Doorley, Neil	13 Nov 2014
16. The WAR on our Doorstep	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Madigan, Michael	13 Nov 2014
17. G20 Brisbane: Protesters Complain of Police Overkill	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Olding, Rachel	14 Nov 2014
18. Police Brace for 13 Brisbane G20 Protests on Saturday.	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Moore, Tony	14 Nov 2014
19. It'd Be a Riot if it Wasn't so Serious	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Murray, David	14 Nov 2014
20. The Seven G20 Protests you Should Know About	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Olding, Rachel	14 Nov 2014
21. G20 Protests Kick off with Beach Party for 'World Leaders'	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Silva, Kristian	14 Nov 2014
22. Police Step up Efforts to Render Summit Zone Pest-Free	<i>The Australian</i>	Elks, Sarah	14 Nov 2014
23. Protesters Claim Fake Cameras as their Work	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Murray, David	14 Nov 2014
24. No G20 Arrests or Threats so Far: Police	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Stephens, Kim	14 Nov 2014
25. G20 Protests Begin on First Official Day of Summit	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Silva, Kristian	15 Nov 2014

26. G20 Brisbane: Remanded Activist Planned to Confront Obama	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Bochenski, Natalie	15 Nov 2014
27. Police G20 Protection Action Intimidating, Says Protester	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Olding, Rachel	15 Nov 2014
28. Protesters Defying G20 Laws at Major Rally	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Australian Associated Press	15 Nov 2014
29. G20 Brisbane: Passionate, But Mostly Peaceful Protests	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Atfield, Cameron and Stephens, Kim	15 Nov 2014
30. Missing Dart-Man on Summit Banned List	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil	15 Nov 2014
31. No Masks, no Eggs, no Leniency: Cops Ready for Protests	<i>The Weekend Australian</i>	Elks, Sarah	15 Nov 2014
32. G20 Brisbane: Police Face Toughest Test at World Leaders' Meeting	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Anon	15 Nov 2014
33. Coolhead Kept	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Doorley, Neil	16 Nov 2014
34. Brisbane G20: Police Use Diplomacy to Keep the Peace	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Stolz, Greg, Vonow, Brittany and Stigwood, Emmaline	16 Nov 2014
35. G20 Police Happy with Well-Behaved Protesters, but Warn Summit Isn't Over	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Stephens, Kim	16 Nov 2014
36. G20 Police Contact Banned Protester Gavin George Begbie	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Moore, Tony	16 Nov 2014

37. Weather Takes Heat out of G20 Protests	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Bochenski, Natalie	16 Nov 2014
38. G20 Brisbane: US Secret Service Praises Queensland Police for Security	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Silva, Kristian	16 Nov 2014
39. Copping it Sweet for Peaceful Protests	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Stolz, Greg	17 Nov 2014
40. G20: The New Security Era – Get Used to it Say the Experts	<i>Brisbane Times</i>	Olding, Rachel	17 Nov 2014
41. Security Proves a Triumph of Planning and Police Diplomacy	<i>The Courier Mail</i>	Murray, David	17 Nov 2014